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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

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| Proceeding | 92025859 |
| Party | Defendant General Cigar Co., Inc. |
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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD**

In the matter of Trademark Registration No. 1147309

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: February 17, 1981

AND

In the matter of the Trademark Registration No. 1898273

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: June 6, 1995

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| EMPRESA CUBANA DEL TABACO, d.b.a. | : | |
| CUBATABACO, | : | |
| | : | |
| Petitioner, | : | |
| | : | Cancellation No. 92025859 |
| v. | : | |
| | : | |
| GENERAL CIGAR CO., INC., | : | |
| | : | |
| Respondent. | : | |
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Steven Abbot – Annex S

Redacted Public Version

The Cuban Thaw: What it Means for Cuban Cigars in the U.S.

By **John Virata** - May 21, 2015



As of May 21, 2015, government officials in the United States announced that they are closer to fully normalizing relations with the Caribbean island nation than they have been. Cuba next week will be removed from the U.S. list of nations that sponsor international terrorism. U.S. diplomats, however are still not free to travel in the country unfettered.

The news regarding Cuba may be great for cigar smokers in the U.S.—eventually

By Rick Rhay

Most of us know exactly where we were and what we were doing when the news came in. It came to me in the form of a text message from my brother, a fellow cigar lover: "The ban on Cuban cigars is over!" It was nothing less dramatic than that.

It was December 17, 2014, at 10:11 a.m. Pacific Standard Time. I was in the car, driving to the mall with my wife to do some Christmas shopping, and I quickly jumped on my phone to check the regular news outlets. Sure enough, it was all over the Web. What has in the weeks following become known as the "Cuban Thaw" was just beginning to break, but for everything I could find, it was true. The embargo was ending. Cuban cigars would be legal again.

Most of us still cannot legally travel to Cuba, and for those who can, \$100 in tobacco products won't get them very many Cuban cigars.

That was the first few minutes. As I continued to read, the realities of the situation began to set in. You don't tear down a 50-year-old foreign policy wall overnight. The Cuban Trade Embargo has been in place longer than the Berlin Wall stood. This would take some time, and what has happened as of this writing are merely the first steps on a long and difficult road.

How the Embargo Came to Be

The date generally given for the onset of the trade embargo with Cuba is February 7, 1962, with an executive order issued by President Kennedy. But this was only an intermediary step in an ongoing series of political maneuvers between the two nations. On January 1, 1959, Fidel Castro's Movimiento 26 de Julio (26th of July Movement) overthrew the government of then-Cuban-President Fulgencio Batista, establishing at first a socialist state, which evolved into the communist state that persists in Cuba today.

The most direct cause of the embargo was the nationalization of nearly all American-owned businesses and property in Cuba in late 1960. This action took assets in Cuba rightfully owned by American businesses and individuals, and transferred their ownership to the People of Cuba, in the form of the Cuban government, effectively stripping the American owners of their property without compensation or payment, and giving that property to the Cuban state. Properties and businesses nationalized included oil refineries, agricultural companies, mining operations, banking institutions and countless others. By 1968, the government of Cuba had nationalized all privately owned businesses in Cuba, including those of Cuban ownership, as well as those of other foreign owners beyond the U.S. The U.S. government maintains a registry of claims against the government of Cuba for the loss of American property nationalized by the Cuban government, and Cuba refuses to discuss compensation for those claims.

In response to what was deemed to be the theft of American property by the Cuban state, President Eisenhower enacted the initial embargo, which banned exports of goods to Cuba. As relations deteriorated, Eisenhower severed all diplomatic ties with Cuba just before leaving office in January 1961. The political climate worsened under the Kennedy administration, and a little over a year later, Kennedy expanded the embargo to include all imports of Cuban goods, thus making Cuban cigars illegal in the U.S.

It's Not Going Away Overnight

Over the years, various U.S. presidents have made changes to the embargo, but ultimately, what began as executive orders issued by Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy is now enforced by a series of laws passed by Congress. The result is that no president alone can end the

embargo without Congress acting to repeal those laws. All any one president can do is modify those portions of the embargo that remain under executive order.

Given the political climate in Washington, the prospect of a complete or even partial repeal of the Cuban trade embargo in the near future is uncertain. Though most Americans—and much of the rest of the world—favor a return to trade with Cuba, Congress is divided on the subject, and not necessarily along party lines. High-level officials in both parties have come out in support of and against ending the embargo. A significant aspect of that division revolves around the Cuban-American population of Florida.

This culturally diverse and politically divided state has become something of a battleground in the argument over the Cuban trade embargo, in part because of the large number of Cuban immigrants who live there. Nearly one million Cubans have emigrated to the U.S. in numerous waves of migration. Though the mass exodus from Cuba began even before the Cuban revolution, some 400,000 Cuban immigrants arrived in 1980 or later. Most of those who came to the U.S. were fleeing the oppressive Castro regime, and they harbor strong anti-Castro sentiments even today.

This highly vocal and politically active constituency is strongly against lifting the embargo, and has taken significant steps to strengthen it over the years, including supporting the highly controversial Helms-Burton Act of 1996. Among other provisions, this act empowers Congress to override the president's action with regard to ending the embargo. Consequently, what began as an executive order can now only be ended by Congress, which, in this political climate, could prove to be a difficult hurdle to overcome.

What Has Changed So Far

Prior to the announcements in December, regulations regarding travel to and commerce with Cuba were last updated in February 2012. This resulted in the relaxation of travel restrictions, permitting the movement of certain groups of travelers who met specific requirements. This included persons traveling for visits with close family, those doing humanitarian or academic work, or who were participating in certain athletic and artistic activities, and others. Regardless of the reason for travel, the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) required the issuance of specific licenses, granting permission for qualified individuals to engage in travel-related transactions with Cuba under certain constraints.

Notably, the February 2012 update continued to prohibit the importation of goods of any kind or in any value from Cuba, consistent with the ongoing embargo.

On January 16, 2015, new travel regulations became effective, eliminating the requirement for many qualified travelers to acquire a specific license. Most individuals who qualify to travel to Cuba may now do so under the terms of a general license, which does not require any additional permissions or licensing. Some of the prior restrictions on commercial travel providers have been relaxed, and U.S. flight carriers can now resume scheduling flights into and out of Cuba. The categories of individuals eligible for licensed travel to Cuba remain substantially unchanged from the February 2012 update, however, as has the prohibition against general tourism travel.

The Cigar Outlook

The item of most interest to cigar smokers is the authorization of licensed U.S. travelers to Cuba to import up to \$400 worth of goods for personal use, of which no more than \$100 worth can be alcohol and tobacco products combined. While far from the end of the embargo, this provision does provide a narrow opportunity for Americans to travel to Cuba, acquire Cuban cigars and legally bring them back to the U.S.

Cuban cigars may find their way into the United States in the near future.

What does this mean for the average cigar smoker? For the time being, it means next to nothing. Most of us still cannot legally travel to Cuba, and for those who can, \$100 in tobacco products won't get them very many Cuban cigars. Additionally, the new provisions still do not allow for commercial imports or purchases of Cuban cigars in third-party countries, so it remains illegal for U.S. citizens to purchase Cuban cigars in any other country, as well.

That being said, for those who want them badly enough and know where to look, Cuban cigars are still available. Of course, the trade in counterfeits remains a headache both for consumers and for Habanos S.A., the Cuban state-run tobacco company.

In the medium to long term, this new policy toward Cuba could ultimately lead to the end of the Cuban trade embargo altogether. While such a change seems ultimately inevitable, the gears of government grind slowly. There is still strong anti-Castro and anti-communist sentiment in Florida and beyond, and improved relations between the U.S. and Cuba could quickly be derailed or even reversed following the next presidential election in 2016 (Former Florida governor Jeb Bush, a potential candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, has been highly vocal in his opposition to lifting the embargo).

A sound approach for any administration involves a scaling up of trade relations, allowing the manufacturing concerns in Cuba to ramp up production in a healthy way, particularly with regard to cigars. The hope would be to prevent the collapse in quality experienced during the cigar boom of the mid-1990s.

It will likely be some time before La Casa del Habanos Cuban cigar shops begin opening up around the country, or until your local brick and mortar carries two brands of Cohibas, H. Upmanns and Montecristos. There are simply too many political and economic entanglements to unravel to expect any quick or easy solutions. The road to reconciliation is long, but every journey begins with a single step, and that step may have just been taken.

There will come a time when we can tell our grandchildren about the years when we couldn't get Cuban cigars legally. They will wonder why, and we'll tell them that the thriving democracy that is the Cuba they know was once a very different place, but with our help, Cuba overcame its demons and emerged as a vibrant, productive nation, and we were all the better for it. And then you'll be able to tell them where you were when the Cuban trade embargo ended.

Rick Rhay is a Southern California photographer and cigar lover, and occasional editor of the Cigar Sasquatch online journal at CigarSasquatch.com.

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An Interview with Charlie Sheen

By **CigarAndSpirits** - Aug 28, 2014



With Fire in His Soul and Passion in His Blood, the Man is a Totally Bitchin' Rockstar from Mars

by Jon Shakill

I said it; Charlie Sheen is a totally bitchin' rockstar from Mars. His words not mine, but I'd have to agree. And no, the hilarious metaphor is not lost on me. Charlie is not an average man. The guy is funny- he's a comedian, and he can act. He's a movie star, TV star, and collector of the finest wrist watches in the world. He's the comeback king who's proven it time and time again, through all the ups and downs, and his relentless ability to reach the top after the occasional fall from grace. He's been the hero and the underdog, but has never given up. He's authentic and down to earth at his core, and isn't afraid to say it like it is, a real straight shooter. He holds two records in the Guinness Book of World Records; one for being the highest paid television actor of all time, and one for the fastest person to reach 1 million followers on Twitter (he now has nearly 7 million followers). He's also a cigar enthusiast with more than 150 boxes of cigars, who enjoys the occasional glass of 57 year old Macallan Scotch. Charlie Sheen is a man's man.

Saying his name is itself capable of evoking a myriad of thoughts and emotions. Whether it is the bad boy image that's so often seen in the media, the fairly recent Two and a Half Men "departure," or just as likely, the fond memories of some of a generation's favorite blockbuster movies. It seems rarer in the modern discourse that a person *doesn't* have an opinion about

Charlie Sheen. Whatever that opinion is, one thing is for sure— the man is by far one of the most successful actors of the last 25 years, and arguably one of the most successful actors of all time.

You may be asking yourself “how can Charlie Sheen be one of the most successful actors of all time?” Well right out of the gates in

1986, at the age of 21, the first major movie Sheen starred in, *Platoon*, won the Academy Award for Best Picture, as well as the Golden Globe for Best Drama, among other accolades. Readers may recognize the movie from the latest DirectTV commercial where Sheen does a brief comedic reenactment. The commercial marks the beginning of yet another comeback for Charlie, and underscores his ability as one of the few actors who’s reached the pinnacle of success in film, primetime television, and commercials.

Of course everybody remembers the classic financial movie *Wall Street*. The infamous Gordon Gekko played by Michael Douglas, teaches the fresh faced Bud Fox (Sheen) that “greed is good.” The movie, in which Gekko takes Fox under his wing in an insider trading scheme, is one of the quintessential depictions of corporate excess and financial fraud ever made. Charlie followed up the *Wall Street* epic with the 1988 blockbuster *Young Guns*, which opened at #1 at the Box Office. And who could forget bad boy reliever Ricky “Wild Thing” Vaughn, played by Sheen in the 1989 baseball comedy, *Major League*. In 1990, Sheen shared the big screen with Clint Eastwood in *The Rookie*; and in 1991, the comedy *Hot Shots!* debuted at #1, and grossed more than \$180 million at the box office. In 1993, Sheen starred in two comedies: *Hot Shots! Part Deux*, which grossed more than \$130 million, and *The Three Musketeers* which debuted at #1 at the Box Office. Winning?

In 1994, when he was just 29 years old, Charlie Sheen received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Between 1994 and 2004, despite facing various personal setbacks, Charlie starred or appeared in a wide range of feature films and TV shows. Although there are too many to list here, some of the highlights included *Major League II*, *Money Talks*, and *Scary Movie 3*. It was in 2001 that Charlie got his major television break, replacing Michael J. Fox as the star in the series *Spin City*. Just two years later, Sheen was cast as Charlie Harper in the primetime hit series *Two and a Half Men*, which would become the #1 comedy on television. Prior to being released from the show in 2011, in a media frenzy no less, Charlie became the highest paid actor in the history of television, earning some \$2 million per episode. Winning!

Despite the public controversy surrounding the 2011 exit from *Two and a Half Men*, Charlie Sheen is back as strong as ever and ready to triumph yet again. Sheen stars in a brand new show called *Anger Management*, premiering on FX on Thursday, June 28th, 2012, at 9pm. The hilarious, if not ironic premise of the show, is Sheen starring as the character "Charlie," a non-traditional therapist specializing in anger management. Having just finished filming the movie *A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III*, due out in 2013 and directed by Roman Coppola, Charlie is fighting his way back onto the top of the entertainment world. Interestingly, Roman Coppola's father, Francis Ford Coppola, worked with Charlie's father Martin Sheen on the 1979 classic, *Apocalypse Now*. According to Charlie, he has gone back to his roots with this movie, focusing on acting rather than the hype.

In the following interview, Lincoln Salazar and I sit down with Charlie Sheen, as well as his best friend, watch dealer, and social networking guru Bob Maron, as well as marketing guru Larry Solters. Bob Maron is the President of Robert Maron, Inc., which buys and sells some of the world's most expensive and exclusive watches. Charlie and Bob have been the closest of friends for about 7 years now, sharing a passion for watches. Larry Solters, head of Scoop Marketing, is a behind the scenes operator responsible for some of the biggest marketing and public relations campaigns in the entertainment business. He was also once upon a time Executive VP of MCA Music Entertainment Group, and VP of Artist Development prior to that.

Over the course of the hour long interview, we learn about some of Charlie's collections: over 150 boxes of cigars; approximately 20 very exclusive Dupont lighters; and 12 of the world's most exclusive and important watches. We also hear some of Charlie's thoughts on being a man's man, and how he's changed over the last year. Bob Maron provides some additional insights into the reality of working and hanging with Charlie.

Here is our conversation as it happened:

Jon Shakill: Before Charlie gets on the line I'd like to ask you Bob, tell me about your background and how you and Charlie became friends.

Bob Maron: I've been a watch dealer for 25 years. I was doing an online advertising campaign, and Charlie responded to a watch that I was advertising. He left a message about a watch that he was interested in buying. I actually didn't get back to him, because I was just leaving for Europe and then had been in Europe when he was calling me. So when I got back I had another

message on my machine, which was a typical Charlie Sheen, raving message. So I decided to call him back and our first conversation was about why I didn't return his call, as well as about the watch he wanted. So that led to me selling him that one watch, and then many others after that. That was probably 7 or 8 years ago. We became best friends after that pretty quickly, going on vacations together all over the world.

Jon Shakill: So what about Twitter and Facebook, I understand you're heavily involved with Charlie's accounts?

Bob Maron: One year ago, Charlie called me up and said he just finished doing the Good Morning America show, it's a crazy time, I've done the all the TV shows and radio shows, but there's more I want to say to my fans- can you help me? I know that you're on Twitter and on Facebook. I had been trying to get Charlie on the social networking sites for the full year prior to that and he wasn't really receptive to it, but that morning we decided it was the perfect time to go ahead with it. Twitter really gave Charlie a new platform to be able to talk to his fans. When we first signed up for the account, there was so much hype surrounding it. All we did was sit back and wait, and watch the new followers roll in. It was crazy, we were up to a quarter of a million followers without making a single tweet! When we finally tweeted, it was all over the news an hour later and just went viral, that's when it really took off. In the first 24 hours we got a million followers, and the growth has just been exponential. That's when the Guinness Book of World Records got ahold of Charlie, and let him know that he had just set a new world record for the fastest to reach 1 million followers on Twitter. The next fastest before us was Howard Stern, who had gotten to 1 million followers in 30 days.

Charlie Sheen: This is Charlie here. I might add that we also beat the fastest guy to get to 100,000 followers- he did it in a day, and we did it in less than an hour.

Lincoln Salazar: Hi Charlie, I'm the Chairman and Publisher of *Cigar & Spirits Magazine*, and we have the Editor-in-Chief, Jon Shakill, with us as well. Cigar & Spirits is very much of a man's man publication, and we thank you for your time today. Jon will be conducting most of the interview, so let's get on with it.

Charlie Sheen: Sounds good, nice to meet you gentlemen.

Jon Shakill: Charlie, nice to meet you. Let's jump right into it with discussing your love for cigars. How big is your cigar collection, and what are your favorite cigars?

Charlie Sheen: Hey Jon how are you. So as for cigars, I don't claim to be an expert but I know what I like and what I don't like. I can read a thousand different reviews and see some

cigars rated 99 that I hate, and some rated 75 that I love. As far as brands, I really love Cohiba, Romeo y Julieta, vintage Davidoff, vintage Bolivar, Dunhill- I like to mix it up. Every once in a while I'll smoke a Montecristo A, if I have seven hours to burn! It's a commitment. I like a lot of the regional, double banded, cigars as well. You know, the other thing- I personally love a lot of Cuban cigars, all the really great stuff comes from the Vintage Cubans and even some of the contemporary ones. It's a shame they aren't readily available in the United States, because I'd probably own a lot more of them. I'm fortunate to own an unopened box of Cohiba Siglo VIs from 1991, and also a box of Romeo y Julieta tubos from 1957. The box of 1957 tubos is like a time capsule, there are 25 in a box and when I open up one of the tubes, it's like it went in yesterday- it's amazing.

Jon Shakill: How big is your cigar collection?

Charlie Sheen: My cigar collection is about 150 boxes or so.

Jon Shakill: Where's your favorite place to enjoy a cigar, do you have a preference?

Charlie Sheen: It's not really specific, sometimes in the backyard, or an after dinner party, maybe even a commercial airplane! (laughs) No not really, but it just depends. Whenever it feels like the right time, that's when I'll do it. It comes and goes in waves for me; sometimes I won't smoke for 3 months, then I'll smoke more often for 6 months, and then forget I have them. But it's always nice that when I return to them, they're still there.

Jon Shakill: So when you are smoking cigars, how many will you have in a day?

Charlie Sheen: Well there's no specific formula, it depends on whichever way the wind is blowing. But sometimes I like to have a Cohiba Sublime Extra and follow it up with a Dunhill Don Candido '72, something mild at the backend for a second cigar.

So as for cigars, I don't claim to be an expert but I know what I like and what I don't like. I can read a thousand different reviews and see some cigars rated 99 that I hate, and some rated 75 that I love. As far as brands, I really love Cohiba, Romeo y Julieta, vintage Davidoff, vintage Bolivar, Dunhill- I like to mix it up. Hey Jon how are you. So as for cigars, I don't claim to be an expert but I know what I like and what I don't like. I can read a thousand different reviews and see some cigars rated 99 that I hate, and some rated 75 that I love. As far as brands, I really love Cohiba, Romeo y Julieta, vintage Davidoff, vintage Bolivar, Dunhill - I like to mix it up. Every once in a while I'll smoke a Montecristo A, if I have 7 hours to burn! It's a commitment. I like a lot of the regional, double banded, cigars as well. You know, the other thing- I personally love a lot of Cuban cigars, all the really great stuff comes from the Vintage Cubans and even some of the contemporary ones. It's a shame they aren't readily available in the United States, because I'd probably own a lot more of them. I'm fortunate to own an unopened box of Cohiba Siglo VIs from 1991, and also a box of Romeo y Julieta tubos from 1957. The box of 1957 tubos is like a time capsule, there are 25 in a box and when I open up one of the tubes, it's like it went in yesterday- it's amazing.

Jon Shakill: Do you have a particular cigar memory or an experience that comes to mind, that made an impact on you?

Charlie Sheen: Yeah, I was 16 years old and I was driving, and I was smoking a King Edward Swisher Sweet, just because someone had left it in my car. It was the first time I had ever smoked a cigar, and not long after I had to pull over so I could throw up! That's pretty much how it all started (laughs).

Bob Maron: Charlie I know you also have an extensive collection of lighters as well, which would be interesting for the *Cigar & Spirits* readers.

Charlie Sheen: Well, I'm not really "schooled" on all the details of great lighters, but I own about 15 or 20 of the Dupont lighters that I really love. I don't wear jewelry, so the only accessories I leave the house with are a nice lighter, a nice pen, and a nice watch. I don't wear earrings, or bracelets and necklaces or any of that crap. I just like a good lighter, when you pull it out everyone notices that I don't have a Bic. The only thing that sucks is that everyone wants to look at it, and when they open the top gas just goes flying out, but I don't like to be rude. You know that moment Bob –

Bob Maron: Right, it's that moment, it's the worst— you want to carry around a beautiful Dupont lighter, and you don't really want to let anyone use it, but you also don't want to say, "No you can't use my lighter!"

Charlie Sheen: And it's always some hot chick that opens it for a minute while she's telling a boring story, and she can't get it lit because she's trying to flick the actual flint wheel, right. Then I have to politely say, no-no give it back, let me show you. But other than that, they are kind of a pain in the ass to maintain. Usually when I leave the house with one, I'll also stick a Bic in my back pocket as a back-up.

Jon Shakill: So what's the most expensive lighter that you own?

Charlie Sheen: Honestly . . . well, I bought the Dupont Diamond Rain from the Prestige Collection, which they don't make until you order it. It's got like 489 diamonds all over it. It's about \$75,000; it's solid white gold. You have to keep a roll of quarters in your other jacket pocket when you go out with something like that. But other than that, my collection is pretty much pedestrian Dupont's and some Davidoff's. [Editor's Note: the ST Dupont Prestige Collection Diamond Rain Lighter actually has 1,098 diamonds covering the entire white gold body; only 352 have ever been made]

Bob Maron: Well what about all of your cigar brand Duponts? I've seen you give away more Cohiba Duponts than you've actually used!

Charlie Sheen: Yeah I know, I know. And when I buy the next one, I'm like "this one I'm keeping!" Then we're there in the cigar lounge, and I always end up saying "here take it" to someone. I think Bob and I have exchanged something like 25 lighters.

Bob Maron: Yeah, every time I pick up a lighter I think, "oh Charlie gave me this one. Where is the rose gold version? Oh yeah I gave it to him." I've never seen anyone give away more lighters than Charlie, his generosity is amazing— and with nice pens too.

Charlie Sheen: Well if it represents some epic evening, or something memorable that we all shared, I think it's nice for someone to have a token of that.

Jon Shakill: Definitely, that's great to be able to do that. OK, let's move over to spirits now. So what is your favorite drink, and do you prefer it on the rocks, or neat?

Charlie Sheen: I've always said that ice is for injuries. You know, I've seen people chip teeth trying to get that last drop! So I guess the term would be neat, is that what they call it? (laughs) I like a good scotch, I like a vintage Armagnac if you can still get them- like a Napoleon or something really, really exotic. As far as wine goes, I'm kind of a Bordeaux snob; I just can't find anything better. The problem is they only make so much of it from the years that I like. The '96 and the '99 Lafite for example are just amazing. I actually just had a party at my house recently where I opened up a bottle of the '96 and a bottle of the '99. When that happens, I start doing the math and it's just ridiculous. I'll look around and everyone is drinking a glass of wine that's worth like \$1,000.

Jon Shakill: I imagine that adds up pretty fast at a house party.

Charlie Sheen: It can, yes. Well even worse than that, you get the people that come over and start putting ice in the vintage Bordeaux! But the only thing I'm really an expert on is Baseball, not even movies or acting. So who knows?

Bob Maron: Let me tell you a quick anecdote before we move on. Larry, Charlie, and I were out celebrating Charlie getting the cover of *Rolling Stone*. And so the establishment we were at introduced us to a 57 year old Macallan Scotch, and when they told us the price of it, I insisted that we not drink it. About that time is when Charlie insisted that we drink double!

Charlie Sheen: Well that's because no one had cracked the bottle yet.

Bob Maron: Nobody had opened the bottle, that's right! We did it for the first time.

Charlie Sheen: Thinking of the clientele there, and who comes and goes, it was pretty amazing that no one had cracked the bottle yet. So I felt like it should be us.

Bob Maron: Well what's remarkable is that we've been back since, and still no one has touched that bottle, which is surprising.

Charlie Sheen: Yeah, and it was this whole ceremony. They brought out a shot measurer and a guy on his knee to make sure he wasn't going to spill a \$200 drop of the stuff. It was really

something. And it tasted amazing too. Not long after that I had some of the 30 year old Macallan, and I don't want to say it was just as good, but it was pretty damn good too.

Jon Shakill: So you could tell the difference I gather.

Charlie Sheen: Well yeah, the difference when you get the bill is \$2,800 versus \$300. I guess it's the extra 27 years— you have to pay for that.

Jon Shakill: Was that the most expensive drink you've ever had?

Charlie Sheen: For sure it was the most expensive drink I've bought out at a bar or restaurant. Like I mentioned before, back in the day I used to drink Napoleon Armagnac fairly often. So the most I've ever spent on a bottle of anything would have to be that, which at the time was about \$7,000. But that same stuff today would go for like \$24,000.

Jon Shakill: Do you still have any of that Napoleon Armagnac on reserve, or is it all gone?

Charlie Sheen: Yeah it's done, it's over, no more of that stuff left. It's part of the Malibou Lake legacy now I guess.

Jon Shakill: So what do you normally drink when you're smoking a cigar?

Charlie Sheen: Well, it's kind of bizarre, but I drink either Grape Soda or Orange Crush, because of the way they mask any bitterness when I'm down into the final third of the stick. I've been experimenting with different types of sodas. I'm not a big drinker when smoking a cigar, because if you overdo it, you can just be talking then suddenly you're puking on somebody, you know?

Jon Shakill: That actually leads me right into my next question. What would you say to the people out there who have the opinion that you drink too much?

Charlie Sheen: I'd tell them that I don't drink any more . . . or any less. But really what I'd tell them is to mind their own fucking business. I mean it's like, the last time I checked I wasn't up in their grill counting their drinks, you know what I mean? It's the quid pro quo, you know? I just think if people had more substantial shit going on in their own lives, they wouldn't focus on other people so much. I believe people should keep their nose in their own plate. Everybody has some sense of entitlement to some inroad or conduit to unsolicited advice as to how to live your life in that regard. It gets tedious and redundant.

Bob Maron: Let me just add something to what Charlie's saying. I've been drinking with him for 6 years, and I've seen him drink a lot of liquor, but there's a difference between drinking and getting drunk. I think I've seen Charlie drunk twice. Who can't say the same thing about one of their buddies?

Charlie Sheen: Both times there was a shooting, but we're not going to talk about that.

Charlie Sheen: No but really, it's part of my code, it's part of my credo just mind your own freakin business unless somebody asks for it themselves.

Jon Shakill: That makes sense to me. So Charlie, with the understanding that you're a major watch collector, some estimates put your collection worth about \$5.6 million. Is that accurate?

Charlie Sheen: You know, I don't really look at a collection based on its monetary value. I only have 12 watches, and it's not about what they're worth. I mean, it's nice what they're worth when you want to turn one over or sell it, or put it into a trade. But each watch represents something to me that either happened on the day that I bought it, or what was happening in my life when I made the decision to pull the trigger on it. The way Bob and I were doing stuff when we first got together, it was pretty epic. We had two cases coming out of Germany, and three dials coming out of Italy, and some other guy would send us vintage straps. There were moments Bob, what would you say was floating around globally in one trade with like eight watches, like \$3 Million?

Bob Maron: Oh absolutely, at least.

Charlie Sheen: So it was really very exciting, it was very adrenal. And unlike most things that you have so much passion for, then it arrives and sucks, with Patek Philippe there's never a letdown. Especially when you've only seen photos and you're waiting for something for a couple weeks or a month, or whatever, and it finally shows up—it's a pretty cool moment to say the least. You can feel the history and the artisanship involved in this ridiculously incredible timepiece.

Jon Shakill: So what's your favorite watch, or the watch you wear on a day-to-day basis?

Charlie Sheen: I just started wearing a Patek Philippe 5078 Repeater. I really don't want to set myself up for a street mugging here though. But anyways, the great thing about Patek is that it doesn't scream Bling, it doesn't stand out like a piece of jewelry. It's just a nice timepiece. Really the most important thing is that it's not just about the artifact, but like with any collection, it's how something really speaks to you and what it means to you. Like I'll see someone wearing a Panerai with wrists as small as mine, and I'm like "dude, it's okay if everyone in the world doesn't see your watch today." It's like the guy who smokes his cigar so everyone can purposely see the band on it.

Jon Shakill: How long have you been collecting watches? Is it something you grew up with, or just gained an appreciation for as an adult?

Charlie Sheen: I've been wearing a watch since I was like 6 years old. It's something I've always loved and grew up with.

Bob Maron: Charlie is a very astute collector of watches, he has an uncanny ability to seek out and determine what's going to be the next timeless watch that maybe wasn't yet recognized. From the first time that I spoke with him, he called me about a very simple watch, but it was a very important watch. It was a Patek Philippe 5022 rose gold with a rose dial, which was incredibly rare. It seemed like a simple Calatrava, but it really wasn't. It was rose gold, and had an engine turn dial, and at the time some people thought of it as a silly watch. But today it's an important watch, and it's worth twice as much as it was 7 years ago.

Jon Shakill: Bob, who is your typical buyer of the vintage Patek Philippe? Can you tell us more about Charlie's collection from your expert opinion?

Bob Maron: I specialize in the vintage Patek, and virtually all of the people that I sell Pateks to are either overseas or are "well ahead" in years. It's people that remember these watches and wished they'd owned them in the 1940s and '50s, and here you have Charlie a young guy in his early 40s at that time, talking to me about the 1947 Patek. I didn't have any other customers like that. There are very few guys our age that are collecting watches from before we were born, as most people gravitate toward modern watches. Charlie also has some incredible modern timepieces as well. Charlie has an eclectic collection from some of the rarest, more important vintage watches anywhere in the world, and also some of the rarest modern watches. There's always something about his watches that make them unique—they're always 1 of 1, or 1 of 2, or 1 of 3 ever made. I've been doing this for 25 years, and there's still times when Charlie will tell me something I didn't know about a watch, I mean he really does his research. Few people know how astute he really is when it comes to the things that he's interested in. He has this incredible quest for knowledge. He really has impeccable taste, which is probably what has

made him such a successful collector. His collection is worth considerably more today than what he's paid for it. It has to do with his ability to foresee what will be collectible.

Charlie Sheen: And also, for instance, in the film I just did with Roman Coppola called A Glimpse Inside the Mind of Charles Swan III, I wore a 1940s stainless 565 Calatrava. Which, Bob, is one of the best examples of that watch, wouldn't you say?

Bob Maron: It's two-fold, a reference to a 565 is to begin with probably the iconic Patek Philippe Calatrava made in the last 50 years, of all that have been made. The specific one that Charlie owns is probably the rarest and most sought after dial in the world. There are probably 1, or maybe 2, other watches in the world that are equal to that quality. It's a two-tone bulls-eye dial, with Arabic numbers, which is like the one that sits in the Patek Philippe museum. And it wasn't just luck, it was research and patience.

Charlie Sheen: It's sentimental now as well, because it was what I wore during the movie, so it will be part of my permanent collection. I can't get rid of it now. There are some watches that just leave the factory absolutely perfect, and that's been 95% of the Pateks for me, but occasionally I'll get one, especially when Bob gives it to me with a brown strap, it's like, you might as well just shove my mother Bob! (Laughs). I got a thing about brown straps, I just don't wear them.

Jon Shakill: What was the inspiration that sparked your passion for watches?

Charlie Sheen: Well like I said, I always wore a watch as a child. At age 12 I was in Tokyo with my family, and insisted that Mom buy me a gold Seiko World Time, which I still have believe it or not. The first actual decent watch I owned was a Concord.

Bob Maron: Wow, you know Charlie, we've never actually had this conversation before, but the first watch I ever owned was a Seiko also, and the first decent watch I ever owned was a Concord. That's amazing.

Charlie Sheen: Wow, that's great.

Jon Shakill: Interesting, I can tell you guys have a serious passion for watches. Why don't we turn to a couple other topics briefly. Charlie, I understand you were a car collector as well, is that something you're still into?

Charlie Sheen: Well I used to be a car collector, but I'm really not anymore. I'm not even a driver anymore, I'm just a rider. I ended up selling all my cars.

Bob Maron: Didn't I buy your last car from you Charlie? It was a 1970 Chevelle LS6 Convertible, black with white tuxedo stripes, 1 of 17 made.

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\$100 In Cuban Cigars—What It Can Buy

By David Savona (/author/show/id/7)

Posted January 8, 2015

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News stories have abounded about Cuban cigars ever since President Barack Obama announced it was time to normalize relations between the United States and Cuba on December 17. Stories have begun to circulate about the dawn of "legal" Cuban cigars in the U.S., and the item that caught great attention among cigar aficionados is the new regulation that will allow travelers to Cuba to return to the U.S. with up to \$100 worth of Cuban cigars. Current law prohibits any Cuban goods from coming in at all.

While the news is exciting to many, the reality is far more limited than some have made it appear. The changes—which have yet to go into effect, but are expected to occur sometime soon—will come with severe restrictions. First, the \$100 worth of Cuban smokes only applies to those traveling on approved trips to Cuba from the U.S. It won't apply for third-party countries (so you won't be able to take a trip to, say, London or Paris and return legally to the U.S. with Cuban cigars) and it won't apply to buying cigars via mail order. The provision only will apply to trips between Cuba and the U.S.

Havana is filled with amazing cigar shops, each of which *Cigar Aficionado* has visited (/webfeatures/show/id/16208), and although they boast some of the world's lowest prices on Cuban cigars, \$100 still doesn't buy you very much. All cigars in Cuba are priced in Cuban Convertible Pesos (known as CUCs). The CUC is pegged to the price of the U.S. dollar, but there's a 10 percent charge taken by the Cuban government when changing U.S. dollars into Cuban currency.

CIGAR PRICES IN CUBA

ALL PRICES IN CUBAN CUCs, PER CIGAR

| CIGAR | PRICE |
|---|-------|
| Bolivar Belicoso Fino | 7.25 |
| Bolivar Libertadore | 11.00 |
| Cohiba Siglo VI | 20.00 |
| Cohiba Behike BHK 52 | 22.00 |
| Cohiba Esplendido | 23.00 |
| Cohiba Behike BHK 54 | 30.00 |
| Cohiba Behike BHK 56 | 31.00 |
| Hoyo de Monterrey Epicure Especial | 9.20 |
| Hoyo de Monterrey Double Corona | 12.00 |
| Montecristo Petit No. 2 | 7.50 |
| Montecristo No. 2 | 8.00 |
| Montecristo Double Edmundo | 10.00 |
| Partagás Serie D. No. 5 | 6.00 |
| Partagás Serie D. No. 4 | 7.00 |
| Partagás Serie E No. 2 | 8.50 |
| Partagás Salomon | 11.00 |
| Partagás Lusitania | 12.00 |

Source: *Cigar Insider*

The standard size box of Cuban cigars contains 25 sticks, and most retail for more than 100 CUCs, including just about every robusto, Churchill and double corona made on the island. Partagás Serie D No. 4s, the most popular cigar made in Cuba, sell for about 174 CUC per box of 25, or about \$7 per cigar. With the \$100 limit, one could import 14 of them. Cabinets of 50 Partagás Lusitanias sell for nearly 600 CUC (\$12 each), so only eight of those could come back.

Cohibas are more expensive than the average Cuban cigar, and even the diminutive Cohiba Siglo I (4 inches long by 40 ring gauge) sells for more than 100 CUC per box of 25. Big Siglo VI cigars sell for about \$20 each, and Esplendidos are about \$25 apiece. And Cohiba Behike BHK 56 cigars, one of the most expensive cigars in Cuba, are more than \$30 apiece, leaving the buyer only able to bring back three. (We have always been more fond of the smaller, somewhat cheaper Behike 52, a former Cigar of the Year, which can be had for about \$22 each.)

With the advent of smaller boxes, there are options for those seeking a full box that makes the \$100 limit. The new Montecristo Double Edmundo (92 points, *Cigar Aficionado's* No. 15 cigar of 2014 (<http://top25.cigaraficionado.com/number-15-montecristo-double-edmundo/>)) can be had for just under 100 CUC for a box of 10. The Bolívar Libertadores runs about 110 CUC per box of 10, so you can bring back a box—as long as you smoke one of them first.

Any traveler to Cuba who is buying cigars should always be wary of buying outside of the proper channels. Fake cigars abound in Cuba, and a tourist walking around the city while smoking a cigar will likely be approached several times by people offering deep discounts on cigars, particularly Cohibas and Montecristos. Avoid the temptation, as what they have on offer is likely a counterfeit product, and virtually guaranteed to disappoint—no matter what the cost.

See Also:

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Cohiba V. Cohiba (</webfeatures/show/id/cohiba-v-cohiba-19142>)

Thursday, December 22, 2016

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Friday, December 9, 2016

Special Cigars Announced for Cuba's Habanos Festival (</webfeatures/show/id/special-cigars-announced-for-cubas-habanos-festival-19140>)

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Obaid Omar CALGARY, Alberta, Canada, January 8, 2015 3:11pm ET

Less than you might think? Still better and far more than what I'd get in Canada

Alec Trevelyan United Kingdom, January 8, 2015 4:27pm ET

I'd need a slide ruler and a degree from M.I.T. to figure this out.

David Savona January 8, 2015 4:34pm ET

Obaid, Canada has some of the highest cigar taxes in the world, so in some cases you can only get one or two cigars for \$100.

Rick Green Ballwin, MO, USA, January 8, 2015 11:08pm ET

I was amazed to see how inexpensive cigars were in Cuba when I was there since I've only been able to compare them to prices in Europe, Canada and Mexico. The prices were very similar to prices for the NCs in Missouri and Florida with very low cigar taxes.

I think the problem is going to be not so much taxes but the greed of the distributors thinking that they have gold and people are going to rush to buy at any price. American's are used to the NCs, no matter what you say, we think we have some great cigars out there at very reasonable prices. I believe if Cubans are the prices they are in the above mentioned places, they won't sell here.

I loved hearing David Savona's answer just after announcing this years cigar of the year when asked if we would ever have a cigar as good as the Cuban cigar. He pointed out that the best cigar of 2014 was not Cuban (actually, the top three were not Cuban). Those that think Cuban Cigars are all that can be enjoyed should do some blind taste testing on their own.

Simon Schmid Calgary, Alberta, Canada, January 9, 2015 9:52am ET

Yes, Canada does have the highest cost on Cuban cigars, especially in Alberta (with our additional Provincial tobacco tax). Hence why I don't buy Cubans and do all my shopping from the States.

Eric Schwenk January 9, 2015 12:31pm ET

As exciting as the announcement from Obama may have seemed, as David pointed out it does very little to change anything for the American Cuban cigar lover. Almost none of us will ever visit the island until those regulations change, so the announcement really just affects those on missionary trips (who would doubtfully be spending their time buying cigars) and those visiting family members on the island (also not too interested in the smokes). So we are still left sneaking them in our luggage or getting them in the mail and hoping we don't get caught. It remains to be seen if the penalties for those actions will be more loosely enforced and nothing as of now suggests they will.

Robert Peloquin Derby Line, Vermont, United States, January 10, 2015 11:29am ET

My wife and I (we are Canadian) are allowed to bring back 50 cigars each, duty free. We are planning a trip back soon, and hope to visit some cigar companies this time, is it possible to buy direct from them, and if so, would the cigars less expensive than at a retailer in Havana?

John Dodsworth Brantford, Ontario, Canada, January 11, 2015 10:57am ET

That would be 100CAD = 84.34 CUC or 100 CUC = \$118.51CAD. As of January 9th, 2015..... Still pretty expensive with exchange rates.

Laki Gletsos Los Alamos, NM, USA, January 11, 2015 12:56pm ET

One question that I haven't seen answered anywhere. How exactly will customs determine "\$100" worth of cigars? Declared value on the form you fill out as you come into the US? Will they have a chart (presumably with the most current prices of sticks in Cuba)? How will that go down?!!

Jermaine Cannon BOSTON, MA, USA, January 12, 2015 12:03am ET

Well that sucks

David Savona January 12, 2015 7:36am ET

Laki, good question. Details like that have not been finalized to my knowledge.

Curtis Morton Manchester, Tennessee, USA, January 13, 2015 3:34pm ET

I can wait, I am a patient man, I'll pay my little extra until they become available here, I just hope the prices are reasonable..

William Devine Murrieta, CA, United States, January 13, 2015 3:40pm ET

So is the \$100 limit per person? If so and you are traveling with a significant other then they can buy \$100 as well. So you each exchange \$110 and receive 100 CUC and each buy 12 Montecristo #2 and you have 24 cigars for \$220. Not quite a box but pretty close. And much cheaper than what it currently cost me, which is over \$700. So I could take a short vacation with my wife and bring back almost a box of cigars.

Guy Lamoureux January 13, 2015 3:41pm ET

Is it \$100 per person? So you and your wife could bring \$200 worth of cigars. You can also try to find fellow travelers who won't buy any cigars for themselves. They could get thru customs with some of your cigars.

jackson.shaw@gmail.com January 13, 2015 3:49pm ET

I get my Cubans shipped to me here in the US via the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. No taxes and they're authentic. Delivered to my door by my mailman. I recently got a box of Partagas Coronas Juniors (\$220). When I'm up in their area I always stop by. They are declared as "native cultural sticks" on the customs form when shipped. ;)

Timmy Beylemans January 13, 2015 4:05pm ET

When my wife and I visited Cuba in 2013, I bought a box of Robustos in a Casa Del Habano and I got an official document for customs. This document proves authenticity but it also mentions where u got the cigars from and what u paid. So I imagine it will be quite easy to determine what "\$100" of cigars is for customs.

I did however not get this document when purchasing cigars a piece or in 5-packs.

Tom Petersen Toronto, Ontario, Canada, January 13, 2015 5:37pm ET

Laki - When you buy from the gov't store, La Casa Del Habano, they give you official receipt. Sometimes security at the Cuban AP will ask to see it as they do not want fakes leaving the island. Retail prices in Canada are brutal. 3 or 4 times the price in Cuba, and there's virtually no place left (Ontario) to light up and enjoy!

Paul Benson Keller, Tx, USA, January 13, 2015 10:11pm ET

I would imagine the Cuban industry would come up with some attractive and competitive \$100 collections for Americans. They will want to expand their market.

Andres Castro Bronx, NY, USA, January 14, 2015 2:02pm ET

@Erik Schwenk

Why would you say that people visiting relatives on the island would not be interested in purchasing cigars? Are Cuban-Americans not cigar aficionados? I visit my grandparents every summer in Santiago de Cuba. One of my absolute favorite things to do on the island is smoke cigars with my grandfather (and, yes, I do smoke cigars in the USA regularly also). Now I can bring back a box of Bolivar Belicosos... legally.

Skeep January 15, 2015 8:58pm ET

Bizarre A couple years ago, Cigar Afficiando said that Cuba has 8 million cigars in warehouses waiting for the end of the Embargo. Now, we're on the cusp of the end of the Embargo and all this talk of "Pricing." I guess the 8 million cigars have fallen prey to American Capitalistic greed as usual!

doug@rds.com January 27, 2015 11:13am ET

Just returned from Cuba to the U.S. I bought Montecristo #2 for CUC 9.65 each at a reputable retail store.

David Hull High Point, NC, United States, January 27, 2015 12:51pm ET

I have very mixed feelings about even considering buying Cuban cigars. I'm 63 and a USAF veteran, and feel bad enough about loving Nicaraguan cigars (I'm smoking a Nica Libre as we speak), as the gov't. is run by the same socialist-commie-pinko-like guys (Daniel Ortega's party) the Nicaraguan contras were fighting against. BUT, he was elected democratically, the country seems pretty stable, and the Ortega regime doesn't appear to be causing a whole lot of trouble, relative to some of the opposition in country, not to mention the Cubans and Venezuelans. Alas, if I only liked more Dominicans, Hondourans, et al(although Fuentes, some Montecristos, a few Romeo & Juliettas, and Kismets are damned good!

It seems to me that Castro has caused more than a few people more than a little heartburn, to say the least, and previous presidents have opted not to improve relations. IMO, there's no telling what's in it for Obama for "opening up Cuba," but I needn't remind you that Eric Holder, our esteemed attorney general, was Clinton's bag man, err- strike that!- "facilitated" the pardon of fugitive multi-millionaire Mark Rich, who was, as I recall, on the FBI Most-Wanted List, in the waning days of the illustrious William Jefferson Clinton's presidency.

As for me, I'll take my cues and support the preponderance of opinion of the Cuban-American community. For the time being, that sentiment, on the whole, is for continuing to have the Commie, dictatorial, anti-democracy Castros reside squarely in the deep freeze. I love a good cigar, but- as you can tell by my smoking Nica Libres- I don't need "the best," just ones that taste good IMO and are reasonably priced. (My other go-tos include Padron and Drew Estate Tabac Red Eyes, among others- but hey- have you tasted Carlos Torano's Master Maduro? Wow! Me gusta! Hard to get a good deal on them, though! Smoke well, my fellow aficionados!

BRIAN SINGER LOMBARD, IL, UNITED STATES, January 27, 2015 5:25pm ET

How does U.S. customs determine the cost a person actually paid for a cigar? What hinders a cigar merchant in Cuba to write a receipt showing you received a large discount? The cost reflects CUC conversion to \$100 USD for what you may purchase.

Ad Ferrao Orangeville, Ontario, Canada, January 27, 2015 6:18pm ET

Just returned from a week in Cuba, the Canadian exchange was \$1.31 for 1 CUC at the bank outlets called CADECAs. Given that LCDH raised the prices of Cuban cigars in 2014, some brands dramatically... I was taken to the cleaners in purchasing my allowed 50 sticks this time around. Also, I checked several cigar shops only to find empty shelves. Spent a day on a bus going from shop to shop to find brands I was looking for with disappointment at most shops. This was my 5th time to Cuba in 4 years, and the 'lack of stock' situation was shocking. I was told that cigar shops will place orders from Havana and only small amounts of the 5 global brands arrive, heard that recently China has been importing record amounts of Cuban cigars almost like they're stockpiling???? Rumour? and stock in Cuba is very limited, only the larger LCDH outlets in larger tourist areas will carry a good selection. Hence the reason I could find nothing but Cohiba, Montecristo, Partagas, Romeos. I even went to an LCDH store and they were a bit better stocked, but barely... Again, not a single Limited Edition box of anything, not one LCDH Release box, lots of the 5 main brands, very little (one or two boxes) of Ramon Allones, Trinidad, Bolivar, San Cristobal, Hoyo, etc and not a single box of Juan Lopez or Vegueros or other Cuban niche brands. At the airport, there were 4 cigar shops! Same situation, only the main 5 brands stocked (and poorly at that, no Behikes at all).

Chris White February 2, 2015 2:55am ET

@Ad Ferrao-I am an expat living in China and it is true, it is hard to find a non-cuban cigar here. They dominate every shop. And, with import taxes and VAT's they are stupefyingly expensive. However, with all the new money in China, and the attitude that the more expensive the product the better it must be, they disappear off the shelves in no time. I love cigars, but I just can't bring myself to pay their prices even though I really want a Cuban cigars. I just bring back 25-50 with me when I travel to the states.

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Saša Josipović Croatia, September 4, 2015 1:22pm ET

David Hull — High Point, NC, United States wake up bud, this is discussion about cigars not politics and you like it or not, that island has perfect climate and soil for some of the best tobacco on this planet! Now back to cigars, my pref is Montecristo # 3, simple and likely one of those cigars for everyones tastebuds. At the end, cigars are like wine, there is not a best one, there is just those you like or not, since each person has a different taste and tastes are hard to discuss or argue, however our (so called not corrupt) politicians could let us enjoy it and not act like they are protecting got knows what while they get hands on anything they want and when ever they want! what do you think they smoke at golf fields ?????!! We should be allowed to bring at least box of 25 cigars no matter the value, same as we have for a bottle of alcohol when returning from a foreign travel !

Hector Santaella Las Vegas, Nevada, Usa, March 20, 2016 7:16am ET

I'm currently deployed and will be bringing back a box of Montecristo No.#2. A coworker of mine return to the states with a box of 25 Montes No.#2 and declared it at customs, he was able to bring them home... It now sits in my humidor. I think if you play it smart and just buy a box, you should be fine. I'm going to try to bring back a bottle of the 7 year old Cuban rum as well.

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The \$100 Cuban Question

By David Savona (/blogs/author/id/7)

Posted: Feb 26, 2015 11:00am ET

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It's all anyone wants to talk about—what kind of cigars can you buy for \$100 in Cuba? More important, in my opinion—what cigars *should* you buy for that \$100?

The landmark decision on December 17 (<http://www.cigaraficionado.com/webfeatures/show/id/Major-Changes-to-US-Cuba-Relations-17916>) to improve U.S.-Cuba relations has changed the laws about official America travel to Cuba. American visitors to Havana have long been forbidden to come back with so much as one cigar or a drop of Cuban rum, but as of January 16 (<http://www.cigaraficionado.com/webfeatures/show/id/US-Cuba-Policy-Changes-Take-Effect-17957>) those who visit this island on authorized trips can legally return home with \$400 worth of Cuban goods, \$100 of which can be tobacco or alcohol. No insult meant to Cuban rum, which is lovely, but my \$100 is going to go strictly to cigars. Yours should, too.

I'm here in Cuba all this week, attending the Habanos Festival with Gordon Mott, and I've been spending time in the city's lovely cigar shops to get a sense of what they have and don't have. Every time I poke around a humidor, I have an eye on that \$100 question.

First, Cuban cigars are relatively inexpensive in Havana. Everything is priced in Cuban Convertible Pesos, known as CUCs, a currency that is officially equal to the U.S. dollar. (When you turn dollars into CUCs in Havana, you are charged a fee, once 10 percent but is now 13 percent, so \$100 U.S. gives you roughly 87 CUCs.) But a fee is a fee, and the CUC is, officially speaking, equal to the dollar, so for our purposes we're looking at cigars that cost 100 CUCs or less per box.

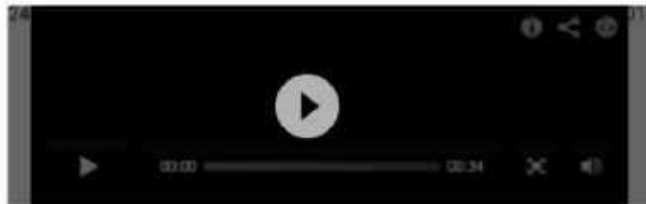
Most cigars here sell for less than 10 CUCs apiece. The entire Montecristo line, for example, ranges in prices from 4.50 CUC for a diminutive Montecristo No. 5 to 9.70 CUC for the Double Edmundo.

Cohibas are quite pricey. The newish Cohiba Pirámides Extra Tubos is 22.50 per cigar, Lanceros are 15.90. Box prices for the Cohiba line put them far out of the \$100 limit. A tiny Cohiba Siglo I (great cigar, by the way) is 172.50 CUC per box of 25. A box of mighty Cohiba Siglo VI (another fine smoke) will set you back 490 CUC. You're not getting many of those for your \$100, so I would avoid them entirely.

So what can one buy for \$100 here? A fistful of cigars is fine, but I want to come home with a box. I shot a little video inside one of my favorite cigar shops, the Casa del Habano on 5 y 16 (everyone calls it Quinta Avenida), where I found a box of 25 H. Upmann Half Coronas. Take a look.

That box is only 87.50 CUC for a box of 25. That's a great way to get a full box of 25 home, and with the extra 12.50 CUC you could even bring home a single smoke, like a Bolivar Libertador (11 CUC). I don't mind the Half Corona, but they are diminutive cigars. I think there's a better box for your \$100.

Farther down the walk-in humidor at Quinta Avenida (a unique creation that hugs the wall in a tight, snaking shape reminiscent of an inverted question mark) I found a stack of boxes of Montecristo Petit No. 2. Only 10 cigars to the box, but these are superb cigars. We rated them 92 points in the April 2014 (http://www.cigaraficionado.com/cigars/detail/source/sitesearch/note_id/13666) *Cigar Aficionado* blind taste test, and they are delicious cigars indeed, truncated versions of the iconic Montecristo No. 2, our 2013 Cigar of the Year. The box of 10 is only 75.50 CUC a box. That's a box worth bringing home, and with the extra 12.50 CUC (9.25 CUC), which has become a favorite smoke here in Cuba.



Of course, shopping for cigars is a pleasure. There's great joy to be had in poking around the cigar shops of Cuba. There's a few more on my list, and I'm happy to go pay them a visit.

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Cigar Diplomacy

By Peter Kornbluh (/author/show/id/260), William M. Leogrande (/author/show/id/455)

From Michael Strahan, November/December 2014 (/issue/show/date/2014-12-01)

As the United States and Cuba have attempted to negotiate their differences over the last 50 years, Cuban cigars have played a diplomatic role in secret efforts to improve relations

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In September of 1980, President Jimmy Carter dispatched a special envoy to Havana to meet secretly with Fidel Castro and negotiate a resolution to a major immigration crisis—the mass exodus of tens of thousands of Cubans from the port of Mariel. During their meeting, Castro agreed to close the port, stanching the flow of refugees across the Florida Strait. The presidential envoy, a seasoned diplomat named Peter Tarnoff, promised that the Carter administration would pursue a broader dialogue on better relations with Cuba in a second term if the president won his bid for re-election.

When Tarnoff returned, he briefed the president and Secretary of State Edmund Muskie in the Oval Office on the positive results of his discussions with the Cuban comandante. He also delivered a gift from Castro to Muskie: a big box of Cuban cigars. As the meeting adjourned, Muskie eagerly unwrapped the elaborate packaging. “But he was disappointed,” Tarnoff recalled, “when under all the wrapping, it held just 100 cigars—the legal limit for what could be brought into the United States.”

Even though the trade embargo has banned or limited their availability in the United States, Cuban cigars hold a special place in the controversial history of U.S. relations with Castro’s revolution. The first president to order the economic sanctions, John F. Kennedy, famously sent his press secretary Pierre Salinger on a cigar buying spree before signing the Cuba embargo decree—some 1,200 Cuban cigars were purchased for JFK’s private stash of smokes. At the height of the Cold War, the CIA concocted a plot to assassinate Castro by sabotaging his cigars. According to a Top Secret report on the many failed CIA efforts to kill Castro, the agency’s Office of Medical Services contaminated a box of 50 of “Fidel’s favorite brand” with a botulinum toxin—“a virulent poison that produces a fatal illness some hours after it is ingested.” The cigars were so heavily poisoned that “the intended victim would not actually have to smoke it,” the CIA report noted. “[M]erely putting one in the mouth would do the job.”

But Cuban Cohibas, Montecristos and Romeo y Juliets have also played a positive role in bridging the ideological chasm between Washington and Havana. During secret attempts at reconciliation, an untold story compiled in a new book, *Back Channel to Cuba: The Hidden History of Negotiations Between Washington and Havana*, Fidel Castro’s government made active and astute use of its famous cigars as creative diplomatic tools. Indeed, throughout the more than half a century of acrimony, hostility and aggression in U.S.–Cuban relations, Cuba has repeatedly practiced the art of “cigar diplomacy,” providing its world-class tobacco products—more often than not Fidel’s favorite Cohiba Lanceros—as a peace offering to open dialogue toward more normal ties with the United States.

CHE: THE FIRST CIGAR DIPLOMAT

Fidel Castro’s first attempt at cigar diplomacy came in the aftermath of the infamous Bay of Pigs invasion. Only four months after the failed CIA-led paramilitary attack, Castro sent his revolutionary deputy, Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, to the Alliance for Progress summit in Uruguay, knowing that representatives of the Kennedy administration would be attending. From the other side of the conference room, Guevara observed a young White House aide, Richard Goodwin, smoking a cigar, and decided to break the ice with a diplomatic dare. He sent an Argentine diplomat named Horacio Rodríguez Larreta across the room to convey this Cold War challenge: “I bet [you] wouldn’t smoke Cuban cigars.” In an interview with the authors, Goodwin recalled his response: “I said, ‘Hell, I’d smoke them in a minute but I can’t get them at home anymore.’ Next day in my room there was a box of Cuban cigars with a handwritten note from Che Guevara.”

The cigars were encased in an ornate mahogany box inlaid with the seal of the Republic of Cuba; the note made it clear that they were intended not for Goodwin, but rather for the president of the United States. In Cuba’s first serious act of diplomacy to move relations forward, Guevara’s note stated simply: “To write to the enemy is difficult. I limit myself to extending my hand.”

At an impromptu all-night meeting in Montevideo, Guevara did just that, approaching Goodwin at a party and inviting him to sit down in a private room to talk candidly about the future of U.S.–Cuban relations. When Guevara sat on the floor, Goodwin did the same. “I was not going to let him out proletarianize me,” Goodwin would later declare. As the room filled with cigar smoke, their conversation lasted “until dawn had lighted the Montevideo skies,” Goodwin recalled, while they shared perspectives on overcoming the hostile state of relations.

Guevara thanked Goodwin for the Bay of Pigs which, he said, had enabled Castro to consolidate the revolution and “transformed them from an aggrieved little country to an equal.” Now empowered as an equal, Guevara made it clear that Cuba sought a peaceful coexistence with the United States and was willing to negotiate on key issues—expropriated properties, Cuban support for revolution in Latin America among them—to advance that goal. “They would like a *modus vivendi*,” Goodwin recorded in a secret memorandum of this historic conversation.

When Goodwin returned to Washington, he went directly to the White House to brief Kennedy and give him Guevara’s gift box of cigars. Kennedy “opened them and he says, ‘Are they good?’ And I said, ‘Good, Mr. President? No, they are the best!’ where upon he immediately took one out of the box, bit off the end and lit it up,” as Goodwin recalled the scene. “You should have smoked the first one,” the president joked, in an oblique acknowledgement that cigars could be used to assassinate heads of state. As Goodwin recalled their conversation, “I said, ‘Too late now, Mr. President.’”

Neither Castro’s cigar diplomacy nor Guevara’s proposals to negotiate a peaceful co-existence between Washington and Havana produced immediate results. Goodwin recommended to Kennedy that the administration “seek some way of continuing the below-ground dialogue that Che has begun,” and even tasked the CIA to develop a “precise, covert procedure” through which talks could be quietly pursued, but for the next year. But Kennedy ignored Cuba’s overture. Instead, he deferred to the hawks in his administration who continued to focus on overthrowing Castro and rolling back the Cuban revolution.

Only in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, which brought the world to the brink of nuclear war, did the White House resurrect the concept of a “below-ground dialogue” with Cuba. During the last months of his tragically abbreviated administration, Kennedy pursued secret diplomatic talks with Castro toward a potential rapprochement, using a series of intermediaries including a French journalist named Jean Daniel. On November 22, 1963, at the very moment the president was assassinated in Dallas, Daniel was in Cuba sharing with Castro a message of reconciliation that Kennedy had personally asked him to deliver. “This is an end to your mission of peace,” Castro exclaimed as they listened to the shocking news on radio. “This is an end to your mission....”

CUBANS FOR KISSINGER

Another decade would pass before the two countries reengaged in serious, and very secretive, talks toward normal relations. This time the initiative was undertaken by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Once again, Castro used cigars to help the dialogue get off to a promising start.

Kissinger faced a diplomatic conundrum over U.S. policy toward Cuba. At home, there was growing pressure in the U.S. Congress to lift the trade embargo, including from Senators and Congressmen who relished a good Cuban cigar. Abroad, Washington's efforts to isolate Castro in Latin America were now isolating the United States instead. One by one, Latin American nations were breaking with the multilateral embargo that the OAS, under U.S. pressure, had passed in 1964 banning economic and diplomatic ties with Cuba. In the summer of 1974, the OAS had scheduled a vote to lift the multilateral sanctions (which would finally be lifted in 1975). “We have a poor hand to play and should ask for a new deal before we lose our last chip,” one aide warned Kissinger in a classified memorandum on the need to negotiate with Castro before the OAS vote.

The Secretary of State agreed. Kissinger decided to make a virtue out of necessity and use these diplomatic circumstances as an opportunity for an historic accord with Cuba. In late June of 1974, he sent a secret, handwritten, note to the Cuban leader. Kissinger's message—unsigned in order to maintain plausible denial if it leaked—stated that he was anxious to discuss bilateral issues and hoped “to find a way to communicate.”

Such discussions needed to be conducted discretely, using intermediaries. “This is the way I did it with Chou En-lai,” Kissinger informed his chosen courier, Democratic Party operative Frank Mankiewicz. Mankiewicz traveled to Cuba with two colleagues, Saul Landau and Kirby Jones, to do a television interview with Castro, and personally handed him Kissinger's note. “This is a very serious communication and we will, of course, consider it very carefully,” Castro told the group after reading the message in his study. Before they returned, Castro gave Mankiewicz a handwritten response for Kissinger agreeing to undertake a series of secret meetings between their respective representatives.

To punctuate his willingness to engage in a secret dialogue with Washington, Castro gave Mankiewicz, Jones and Landau a special box of Cohibas. “This is a box for Henry Kissinger,” he told them. Since travel between Havana and Miami was prohibited at the time, Castro provided his private plane to fly them to Nassau, so that they could more quickly return to the States and give Kissinger both his note and the cigars. But in Nassau, Castro's effort at cigar diplomacy was almost thwarted by a disciplined customs officer. “We had 12 boxes of cigars,” Kirby Jones recalled. “And they did not fit in the luggage. We decided just to carry them.” When the customs agent noticed what they were carrying he said, “Oh my God, what do we have here?” As the agent threatened to confiscate all of the cigars as contraband, Mankiewicz stood up for cigar diplomacy. “Son,” he recalled telling the young agent, “this box of cigars is a personal gift for Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Are you sure you want to take them away?” Mankiewicz prevailed. “If you guys are crazy enough to think you can get these in [to Kissinger],” the customs officer told them as he relented, “you deserve to take them.” Mankiewicz completed his mission, delivering the cigars to the Secretary of State.

So began the most serious diplomatic effort to normalize relations since Washington broke ties with Havana in January 1961. Over the next 18 months, Kissinger and Castro's emissaries traveled back and forth between Washington and Havana; holding furtive meetings in lounges at La Guardia and National airport, the private homes of U.S. officials and even the swanky Pierre Hotel in New York City to address the issues that had divided the two countries since the 1959 revolution. “It is better to deal straight with Castro,” Kissinger instructed his deputies. “Behave chivalrously; do it like a big guy, not like a shyster.”

But despite serious intentions, the Kissinger initiative to bring détente to the Caribbean eventually failed. Castro's audacious decision in 1975 to dispatch 36,000 Cuban troops to Africa to fend off a CIA-supported South African invasion of Angola dramatically narrowed the political latitude for the Republican administration of Gerald Ford to pursue better relations with Havana. Indeed, as the 1976 presidential election year evolved, President Ford tacked rightward on improved relations, and Kissinger himself went from pursuing secret diplomacy designed to arrive at an accommodation with Castro to ordering contingency plans to, as he told the president, “clobber the pipsqueak.”

CLINTON'S CONTRABAND COHIBAS

The Carter administration attempted to pick up on the Kissinger initiative and made significant early gains in establishing at least partial diplomatic relations through the creation of “Interest Sections” in Havana and Washington that functioned like Embassies. But the administration demanded that Castro get his troops out of Africa before the embargo could be lifted and relations fully normalized. Castro's attempt in the fall of 1980 to help Jimmy Carter's chances for reelection by ending the Mariel boatlift—and to curry favor with Secretary of State Muskie with a diplomatic gesture of 100 premium cigars—proved to be too little and too late. There would be no second term for Carter—he lost to Ronald Reagan in a landslide—no second chance to pursue normalizing relations with Cuba. “I think in retrospect, knowing what I know since I left the White House,” the former president later admitted in an interview with the authors, “I should have gone ahead and been more flexible in dealing with Cuba and established full diplomatic relations.”

Neither Ronald Reagan nor the administration of George H.W. Bush offered much opportunity for cigar diplomacy with Cuba. But Bill Clinton was known to love a good Cuban cigar. The Clinton administration engaged in a series of open and back-channel talks with the Cuban government to normalize migration, improve military-to-military relations, establish U.S. media bureaus in Havana and establish counter-terrorism and counternarcotics cooperation. Toward the end of Clinton's first term, Fidel Castro's personal effort to arrange a unique exchange—political prisoners for a presidential guarantee of halting hostile incursions of Cuban airspace—led to one of the stranger episodes of cigar diplomacy in the annals of U.S.-Cuban relations.

In late 1994, an organization of Cuban-American pilots known as Brothers to the Rescue (BTTR), led by a veteran, anti-Castro exile named José Basulto, began overflying Havana and raining down bumper stickers, propaganda leaflets and religious trinkets on the city. “We want confrontation,” Basulto declared after one incursion of Cuban airspace. His penetration of Cuban airspace served “as a message to the Cuban people,” he boasted. “The regime is not invulnerable.”

For a country with a long history of exile terrorism, including bombs dropped from small airplanes on the countryside, these overflights were not only a violation of Cuban sovereignty; the Cubans perceived them as a serious threat to national security. The Castro government used every available channel of communication—formal diplomatic notes, official letters to the FAA, direct phone calls to the State Department and a stream of messages sent through intermediaries to the White House—to make it clear to the Clinton administration that the BTTR flights would not be tolerated and to press the White House to clip Basulto's wings and halt his flights.

A then little-known congressman from New Mexico named Bill Richardson became the key intermediary Castro used to convey this message to Clinton. On January 17, 1996, just four days after Basulto dropped a half million leaflets over the Cuban capital exhorting the Cuban people to “Change Things Now,” Richardson arrived in Havana to lobby for the release of a group of political prisoners. Castro offered a quid pro quo: Richardson “should go back to Washington and get an assurance from Clinton that the flights would be stopped.” Then Castro would release several prisoners in return. To underscore the importance of this mission, Castro gave Richardson a special box of Cohibas as a gift to the president of the United States.

When Richardson returned to Washington, he contacted the White House and received assurances from an official there that the FAA had been instructed to ground Basulto and his BTTR flights. He also called Richard Nuccio, the Special Advisor to the president and secretary of state for Cuban Affairs, and asked him to come to Richardson's Capitol Hill office. "He reached under his desk and pulled out a duffle bag full of cigars." Giving Nuccio a box, he said, "Get this to the president," Nuccio recounted in an interview with the authors.

Nuccio took the box directly to the West Wing office of national security advisor Samuel Berger. "I have a box of cigars. A personal gift from President Castro to President Clinton," Nuccio told him. "Would you like to give it to him?"

In an election year in which Florida would be a swing state, Berger understood the potential political implications of Clinton receiving banned Cuban cigars from Fidel Castro. "Those cigars will never get to the president," he sternly instructed Nuccio. "The president will never know you have those cigars. They are leaving this office right now and going back to your office and going right into the safe. And if I ever hear that the president knows that there are cigars for him, I'll know where he got that information."

But the saga of Castro's attempt at cigar diplomacy with President Clinton did not end there. Concerned about protocol, Berger filed a report with the White House Secret Service that the illicit cigars should be officially confiscated and destroyed. Nuccio recalled what happened next: "These security guys would show up and say: 'Sir, we're here to confiscate the Cuban contraband' and I would say: 'There's no Cuban contraband. This was brought in by a member of Congress and it needs to be preserved.' The officials would respond, 'Well alright sir, but we'll get back to you about this.'"

After several such visits, a team of Secret Service agents arrived at Nuccio's office and informed him that they had specific orders "to destroy the Cuban contraband" and demanded that he turn over the cigars. "We went to the men's room and they went into a stall and crumpled every cigar into the toilet and flushed them down the toilet," Nuccio recalled ruefully. The agents also tore up the cedar box the cigars had been in and tossed it in the trash. All that remained of Castro's gift was a band from one of the Cohibas that Nuccio asked to keep "so I could prove this story."

Sad as it was, the fate of the presidential Cohibas paled in comparison to the human and political tragedy that followed. When he returned to Cuba in early February 1996 to take three political prisoners back to the U.S., Richardson left Castro with the incorrect impression that Clinton had personally ordered the BTTR flights to be halted. Indeed, Castro informed his top aides that he "had a clear commitment from one head of state to another that the flights would be stopped." Yet, three weeks later Basulto's plane and two other BTTR Cessnas took off from Opa-Locka airport in Miami and attempted to penetrate Cuban airspace once again. The Cuban air force scrambled its MIG fighters and shot two of them down, killing four pilots and copilots, and generating a major international crisis. Castro was livid at what he considered Clinton's betrayal; Clinton announced new sanctions against the Castro regime and promptly signed a draconian piece of legislation—sponsored by Senator Jesse Helms and congressman Dan Burton—known as the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, codifying the trade embargo into law, and severely restricting the power of future presidents to fully normalize relations with Cuba without congressional approval.

A CIGAR FOR OBAMA?

In the 18 years since the shoot-down and passage of the Helms-Burton bill, U.S.-Cuban relations have remained largely caught in a Cold War time-warp, despite changes in both nations. In Cuba, Fidel Castro fell ill in July 2006 and passed the baton of power to his brother, Raúl, who is currently leading the country through a slow and difficult transition from a Soviet-style centrally planned economy to a socialist market economy modeled on Vietnam and China. In the United States, opinion polls now show a majority of U.S. citizens, and more importantly, Cuban-Americans in Florida, favor normal relations. Yet, the embargo persists, as do U.S. efforts to foster regime change in Cuba through semi-covert "democracy promotion programs." The United States is now the only nation in the Western Hemisphere that does not have fully normal diplomatic and economic ties with Cuba.

To be sure, President Obama understands the folly of this self-defeating posture. "We've been engaged in a failed policy with Cuba for the last 50 years, and we need to change it," he declared as a candidate in 2007. To his credit, he has expanded "people-to-people" travel to Cuba, and lifted all restrictions on the ability of Cuban-Americans to visit their families on the island. While the tone of relations has changed for the better, however, the overall policy has not. In his first six years in office, Obama has failed to lift the ban imposed by his predecessor on bringing home even one box of Cuban cigars from Havana, let alone moved U.S. policy toward Cuba into the 21st century.

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Cigar Diplomacy

By Peter Kornbluh (/author/show/id/260), William M. Leogrande (/author/show/id/455)

From Michael Strahan, November/December 2014 (/issue/show/date/2014-12-01)

As the United States and Cuba have attempted to negotiate their differences over the last 50 years, Cuban cigars have played a diplomatic role in secret efforts to improve relations

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With two years to go in Obama's presidency, conditions for a rapprochement between Washington and Havana seem more propitious than ever. Facing no more elections, Obama no longer has to concern himself with the political implications of using his presidential powers to advance relations. Nor does he need to worry about the impact on his would-be successor, Hillary Clinton, who has already stated publicly that the embargo is counterproductive to U.S. interests.

Obama's legacy would be aptly served by breaking the enduring logjam of Cuba policy. Hemispheric diplomacy will soon provide him with an opportunity—should he choose to take it. Like Kissinger in 1974, Obama confronts a rebellion of Latin American nations, demanding that Cuba no longer be excluded from regional affairs. Despite Washington's objections, Panama, which is hosting the Seventh Summit of the Americas next April, has invited Cuba. Raúl Castro's government has indicated that he will participate. Obama will likely attend rather than boycott and risk damaging U.S. relations with the entire hemisphere; if so, the presidents of the United States and Cuba may well come face to face in a working diplomatic forum for the first time since the 1959 Cuban revolution.

"The United States seeks a new beginning with Cuba," Obama declared at the first Summit of the Americas he attended in 2009. "I know there's a longer journey that must be traveled to overcome decades of mistrust, but there are critical steps we can take toward a new day." One such step would be for Obama and Castro to seize the opportunity at the forthcoming summit to sit down and talk informally about how to improve U.S.-Cuban relations, which both have stated they want to do. Perhaps Raúl will bring Obama a box of Cohiba Lanceros as a peace offering. Then they can smoke a Cuban together while they contemplate how to move beyond more than 50 years of hostility that no longer serves the interests of either nation, toward a new beginning, and a new day, in U.S.-Cuban relations.

Peter Kornbluh and William M. Leogrande are coauthors of the just-published book, Back Channel to Cuba: The Hidden History of Negotiations Between Washington and Havana (University of North Carolina Press, October 2014).

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Raj B Surrey, BC, Canada, December 31, 2014 5:44pm ET

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Ultimate Gifts: Forbidden Treasures

CHARL CARLETON HACKER DECEMBER 1, 2009



[BACK TO ROBB REPORT, 21 ULTIMA](#)

E GIFT

boxes of Dunhill Selección Suprema Don Candido No. 505 pre-embargo Cuban cigars.

boxes of H. Upmann Dunhill Selección Suprema No. 201 pre-embargo Cuban cigars.

cabinet of Montecristo Selección Suprema No. 1 pre-embargo Cuban cigars.

aniel Marshall custom-made humidor with a solid-gold medallion featuring a platinum filigree of the recipient's name, family crest, company logo.

0,000

Since the february 1962 U.S. embargo against Cuban products, American aficionados have coveted the Havana cigars that citizens of other countries are free to enjoy. For these disadvantaged Americans, a box of pre-embargo Havanas remains the holiest of Holy Grails because such a prize is legal to purchase and possess in the United States.

Although such cigars rarely come on the market, when they do, it is usually at auction. A cache of pre-embargo Cubans was recently discovered in London by Alfred Dunhill during a move from the firm's Jermyn Street location to its present address at Bourdon Place, Mayfair. The company, which specializes in vintage cigars, is offering it to one Robb Report reader.

The treasure trove comprises eight cedar boxes of 25 cigars each and one cedar "cabinet" of 50 cigars, for a total of 250 cigars. Specifically, the collection contains six boxes of Dunhill Selección Suprema Don Candido No. 505 (3 1/2 x 30), two boxes of H. Upmann Dunhill Selección Suprema No. 201 (4 x 36), and one cabinet of Montecristo Selección Suprema No. 1 (6 1/2 x 42). All customs duties or excise taxes on these pre-embargo cigars are included in the purchase price.

To house this assortment, Daniel Marshall—the master artisan who, since 1982, has handcrafted humidors for celebrities, royalty, and brands including Tiffany & Co., S.T. Dupont, and Alfred Dunhill—designed a 100-cigar curved-lid Signature Treasure Chest humidor. This work of art is fashioned with rounded corners of vavona burl, inlaid with ebony, and protected by Marshall's glasslike

trademark “1,000 coat” finish. Once the Signature Treasure Chest humidor is complete, Daniel Marshall will coordinate the importation and delivery of the pre-embargo cigars, making this gift a smoke dream come true.

Daniel Marshall, 714.973.8660, www.danielmarshall.com

The selection of pre-embargo Havana cigars in combination with the Daniel Marshall Signature Treasure Chest humidor is available to only one buyer and must be purchased by December 31, 2009. The buyer must be at least 21 years of age.



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Finish



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Monogram Whiskey Blended

Rye Is a Star



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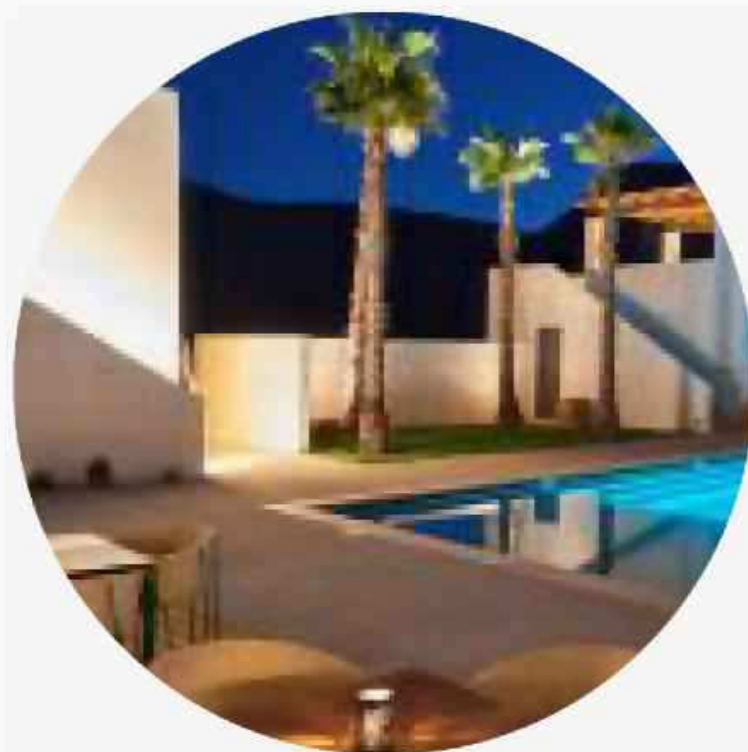
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BY ROBB REPORT STUDIO

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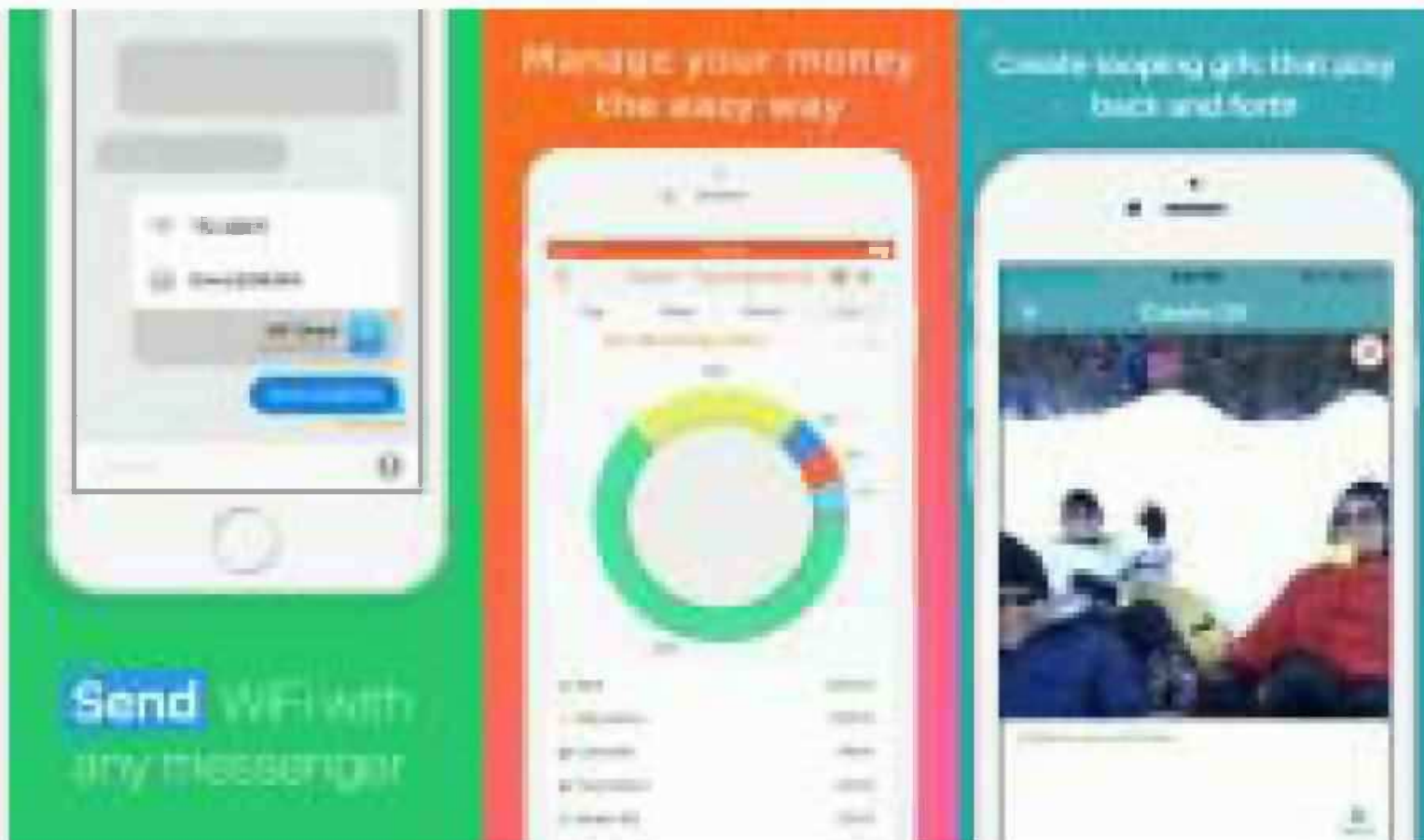
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Robb Report

Cuban Cigars Are Legal Again. This Is Your Guide to Buying the Best

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This is indeed an historic time for American cigar smokers as, for the first time since 1962, restrictions on **Cuban cigars** have been lifted, and U.S. citizens traveling outside of the country can now legally bring back what once was Havana's "forbidden fruit."

But it is still illegal to sell Cuban cigars in the United States. That means you won't be finding Havana's finest at your local tobacconist's any time soon—numerous obstacles prevent that, including the fact that many Cuban and non-Cuban cigars share the same names (think Cohiba, Partagas, and Fonseca, for example).

However, you can now legally buy Cuban cigars in any country except the United States. But beware of fakes. Because of their reputation and mystique, counterfeit Cuban cigars are rampant worldwide—even in Cuba. Cuban tobacco has, in varying degrees, a slight earthiness in taste and aroma, and you do not usually find this characteristic in counterfeit cigars. But it is not just the possibility of inferior tobaccos—Cuban or otherwise—one should guard against; bands and boxes (even when date-stamped on the bottom) are commonly counterfeited. Therefore, the best places to buy Cuban cigars are from reputable tobacconists, which include La Casa del Habano shops and Duty Free stores.

When buying Havanas by the box, look for the official Habanos S.A. watermarked and hologramed stamp, which has been in use since 2009. Plus, make sure all the cigars are of uniform color. There are approximately ninety shades of brown, and cigar makers

employ a color-sorter to ensure every cigar in the box is the same color. It is also wise to check the second layer of cigars in the box. If they are a different shade of brown, select a different box.

And finally, even with the newly relaxed rules, the cigars you bring back must be for personal consumption—they cannot be for resale. And U.S. customs regulations still apply, which means returning travelers are limited to 100 cigars. Considering Cuban cigars typically sell from \$17 to \$40 apiece—not counting limited editions and other rarities—that may effectively limit your purchases to four boxes or less. But to help ensure the brand of Cuban cigars you buy will be the ones you will enjoy smoking, here are our top 10 recommendations.



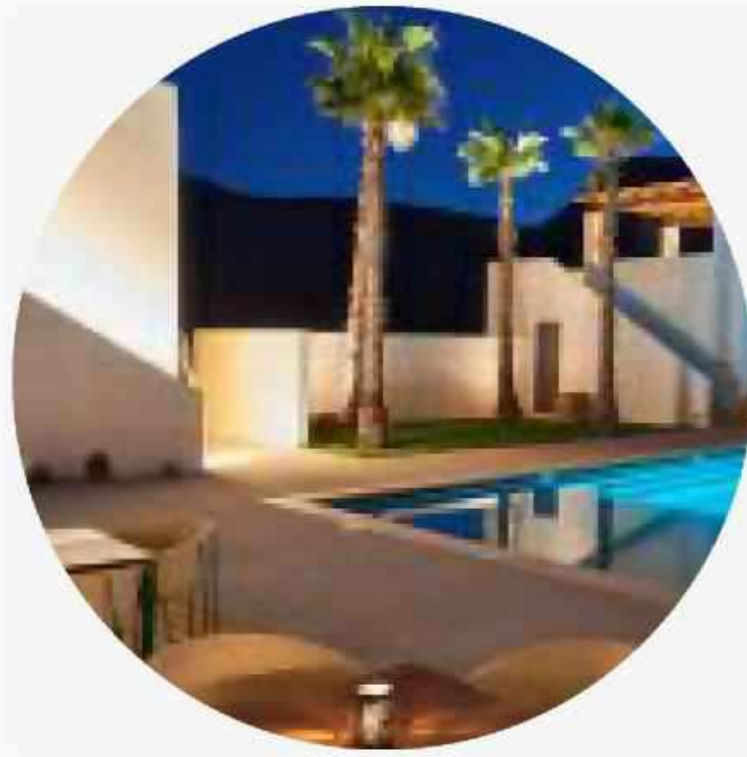
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BY HYUNDAI

One hundred years later, Patrick Bergel, the great-grandson of Shackleton, took on the challenge of crossing Antarctica.

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FOOD & DRINKSPIRITS

Robb Report

Smoke: Made in the Connecticut Shade

BY RICHARD CARLETON HACKNEY AUGUST 1, 2002



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Whenever cigar smokers gather, a frequent debate is whether the United States can grow cigar tobacco. End the argument now; the answer is yes. In fact, the mild Connecticut Shade wrapper leaf thrives only in the New England state in much the same way some Cuban tobaccos reach excellence only when they are grown on Cuban soil.

First planted in the early 1900s in Connecticut—hence the name—the tobacco has been grown since the 1970s in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and other Latin American countries. However, none of those countries has been able to produce a leaf with the same mild and spicy taste, floral aroma, rich color, and silky elasticity (it must be pliable enough to be worked by the cigar roller) as Connecticut-grown Connecticut Shade.

The soul of Connecticut Shade lies in a 2-mile-wide strip of rich topsoil that stretches through the Connecticut River Valley from Hartford to West Suffield. This ribbon of land is resplendent with leafy tobacco plants growing under the gauzelike ceilings of synthetic cheesecloth that furnish the shade from which the tobacco derives the second half of its name. Connecticut Shade is a blend of Sumatran and Cuban seed tobaccos, and filtering out 30 percent of the sunlight re-creates the conditions of Sumatra's perpetually cloudy skies.

Joseph Cullman Jr. created the Connecticut Shade variety almost 100 years ago, and today his son, Edgar Sr., and grandson, Edgar Jr., are chairman and president/ CEO of General Cigar Co., one of the largest growers of Connecticut Shade. General Cigar and its affiliates own 8,000 acres in Connecticut, and Connecticut Shade is planted on 1,000 acres of the finest soil. The loamy earth is rich in minerals, giving Connecticut Shade its medium-to-fast burning characteristics and distinctive gray-white ash.

Soil is one reason for the flavor, but the aging process is just as important. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Cullmans moved their tobaccos from Havana to their Connecticut warehouses for winter storage. The cigars that were made from those bales of tobacco presented a much deeper aroma and a more pronounced taste than those made from tobacco stored in the Caribbean. A few leftover bales spent a second winter in the warehouse, and these tobaccos had even more depth. Successive winters added to the complexity of the taste, and thus was born General Cigar's exclusive winter sweats process.

General Cigar, like most companies with Caribbean factories, ships its Connecticut Shade wrappers to Santiago in the Dominican Republic for sorting and fermentation after they have been harvested and cured. The next step, however, sets General Cigar's

Connecticut Shade apart from the rest. Only General Cigar ships its wrappers back to the United States for a winter aging. The dry and intense cold in Hatfield, Mass., saps half of the tobacco's humidity, bringing it to about 8 percent. In the spring, the tobacco is returned to the Dominican Republic, where the tropical climate rehumidifies the wrapper, opening the tobacco's pores and creating a mellow taste. Then, layered with a new harvest, the tobacco is fermented to combine the best properties of both crops. After fermentation, the tobaccos are separated, and the winterized tobacco is shipped back for a second winter sweat. It is then returned to Santiago for a final aging before it is rolled into cigars. The winter sweat process is time-consuming and costly, but the technique reduces tar and nicotine and gives the wrapper an underlying creamy sweetness. Of the 251 million premium cigars imported into the United States in 2001, 50 million were wrapped with winter sweat Connecticut Shade.

"Being able to produce a good wrapper is paramount to being able to produce a good cigar," says Edgar Cullman Jr. "Connecticut Shade is our heritage."



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A photograph showing a person crouching on the ground next to a rhinoceros in a savanna setting. The person is wearing a dark shirt and light-colored pants. The rhinoceros is standing and facing the person. The background shows dry grass and trees.

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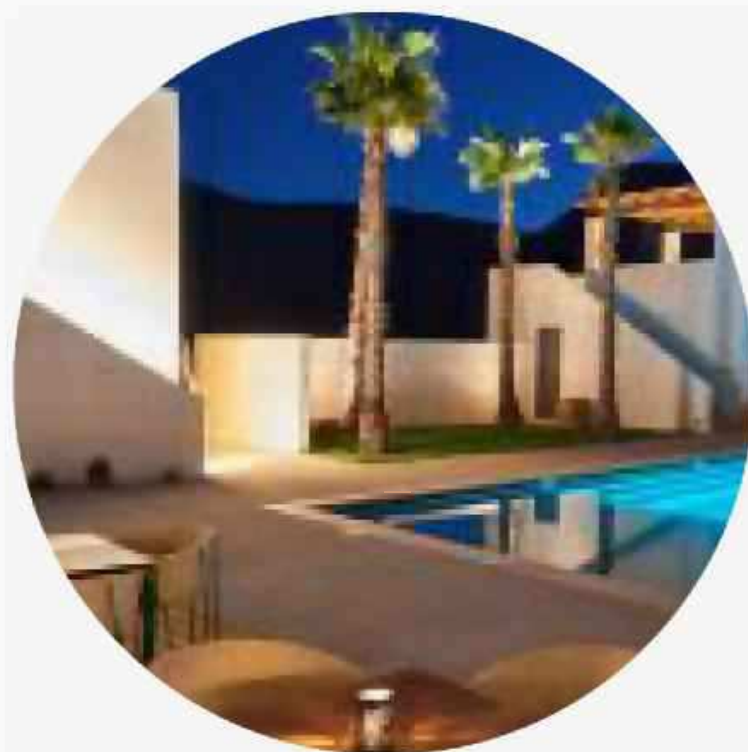
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BY ROBB REPORT STUDIO

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Robb Report

Havanas: A Buyer's Guide

TON HADNER JULY 20, 2015



REPORT, ROBB REPORT COLLECTION

For opinion, not all Havanas are stellar stogies. Here is how to make the most of the relaxed new rules.

Not American [cigar](#) smokers in Europe. They are the ones who overpay for a dried-out Cuban cigar and then spit it as the wrapper cracks and unwinds. But that does not matter, for they are relishing a forbidden fruit, no matter how the smoke may taste. Such is the siren song of Havana cigars, which undoubtedly would not have their popularity if they not been banned in America.

Since the embargo, Cuban cigars have acquired an enormous mystique in the United States. But the truth is, not all are great—in fact, about half of the roughly 40 brands produced there are not worth considering, now that U.S. citizens can buy back \$100 worth of Cuban smokes.

When President Barack Obama relaxed the rules imposed by the 1962 embargo. It is now permissible to bring \$400 worth of Cuban goods to the United States, \$100 of which can be cigars or alcohol. Because of the scarcity of Cuban cigars in this country, they are smuggled in illegally, though many of the so-called Cubans here are counterfeit—most Americans are not familiar with the brands. And being a hand-rolled [product](#), there are variances in the quality.

"The problem was about 15 years ago," says Jemma Freeman, the managing director of Hunters & Frankau, the United Kingdom's largest Havana cigar importer. "Even Habanos admit that things were not right in 1999 to 2000, and I believe the lesson of quality was learned in this period. Nevertheless, quality is always a priority for the tobacco industry in Cuba, and they have been addressing it since those days."

Hunters & Frankau inspects every box of Havanas sold in the U.K. and applies an EMS (English Market Selection) stamp to each box before it leaves the company's warehouse. Because of this and other quality controls, such as controlled humidity during storage, the U.K. is among the best places—along with Spain and Switzerland—to buy Cuban cigars. But American citizens will have to smoke them on the spot: The new regulations allow for importing \$100 worth of Cuban cigars only if those cigars are purchased in Cuba.

To make the most of that small allowance, remember that a steady supply of quality tobacco is scarce on this island nation, and there are only so many top (Grade 9) rollers, whose talents are reserved for the better brands, such as [Cohiba](#), [Montecristo](#), [Partagás](#), [Romeo y Julieta](#), and [H. Upmann](#), to name five of the most popular Havanas. A Grade 9 pedigree is evident in the

consistency of the shape, the smoothness of the wrapper, and the lack of any hard or soft spots along the body of the cigar itself. Some inferior cigars will be rolled too tightly, resulting in a difficult draw. Others will be too loosely constructed, allowing an overabundance of air to be taken in with the smoke, which often leads to hyperventilation—that light-headed feeling—while puffing.

Also keep in mind that counterfeits are rampant in Cuba, too, especially in Havana. Avoid buying from street vendors and hotel clerks, and choose reputable sources, including La Casa del Habano stores (which are partially owned by the Cuban government); direct sales at the factories; or the cigar shops of the better hotels, such as the Meliá [Cohiba](#) and the Iberostar Parque Central.

Finally, although La Casa del Habano offers fairly consistent prices and some of the best values, cigar costs can fluctuate elsewhere, so it is a good idea to shop around. Most Cuban cigars cost from \$7 to \$25, depending on [brand](#), [size](#), and where they are purchased. That means, under the newly relaxed rules, you can bring home approximately four to 14 authentic Havana cigars.

(Continues on next page...)

Here are Robb Report Collection's top 10 recommendations.

Cohiba, particularly the Espléndido or better yet, a Behike, a large-ringed variation that is the perfect digestif cigar. These are medium-full in character but not overpowering. However, newer smokers may want to select the kinder, gentler Cohiba Siglo series. According to Freeman, due to its popularity, Cohiba is the most frequently counterfeited [brand](#).

Trinidad. This started out as Castro's "secret" VIP cigar that replaced the Cohiba in popularity when it began to be sold to the public in 1982. As one of the most expensive choices, depending on where you buy it, four or five of these medium-full-flavored smokes will use up most, if not all, of your government-approved budget.

Montecristo. The No. 2 specifically is a perennial favorite. Medium-full-bodied, it carries an undertone of sweet spice.

Partagás. Series D, No. 4 (a robusto) is a popular [size](#) for this powerhouse brand. It is tantamount to smoking a porterhouse steak; if you have an hour to spare, try a Lusitania.

H. Upmann. Medium strength, this gentle smoke still retains enough earthiness to make it suitable for either early or late evenings.

Romeo y Julieta. Medium strength with a touch of sweetness, this is a perfect cigar when you are not quite sure what to buy.

Punch. Subtly powerful yet smooth, with a rich, leathery finish.

Hoyo de Monterrey. Fairly mild; think Irish whiskey, or blended Scotch.

Vegas Robaina. Medium full in flavor; one of the most complex and spicy Havanas around and perfect for any time after lunch and beyond.

Cuaba. The shapes are all figurados; a mild-mannered smoke ideal for novice and connoisseur alike.

(Continues on next page...)


A Fresh Ingredient

Savvy Las Vegans know that the cigar lounge above André's Restaurant at the Monte Carlo Resort and Casino provides a rare opportunity to enjoy a premium cigar from chef André Rochat's well-stocked humidor and a fine spirit from a list featuring 200 single malts, Cognacs, and Armagnacs. Now the Michelin one-star restaurant has remodeled its second-floor hideaway and reopened it as André's Cigar Lounge and Culinary Library ([andrely.com](#)).

The walls of this intimate lounge, which opened in March, are lined with nearly 700 cookbooks from Rochat's personal collection of

more than 1,000 volumes, as well as historic menus assembled during his 55 years in the culinary world. All of it is on display and available for guests to peruse and for chefs to borrow. Cookbooks date to the 18th century and include The First American Cookbook written by Amelia Simmons in 1796, autographed books by legends such as Julia Child, Joël Robuchon, and Paul Bocuse, and cookbooks by modern luminaries like Daniel Boulud, Thomas Keller, and Massimo Bottura. “This is now a place where people can read, eat, drink, and smoke a good [cigar](#),” Rochat says. “The only place like it in Las Vegas.”

Or anywhere else.

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A person is shown using a Technogym fitness machine in a modern, minimalist home setting. The room has large windows and a clean, contemporary design. The person is in motion, possibly performing a workout routine.

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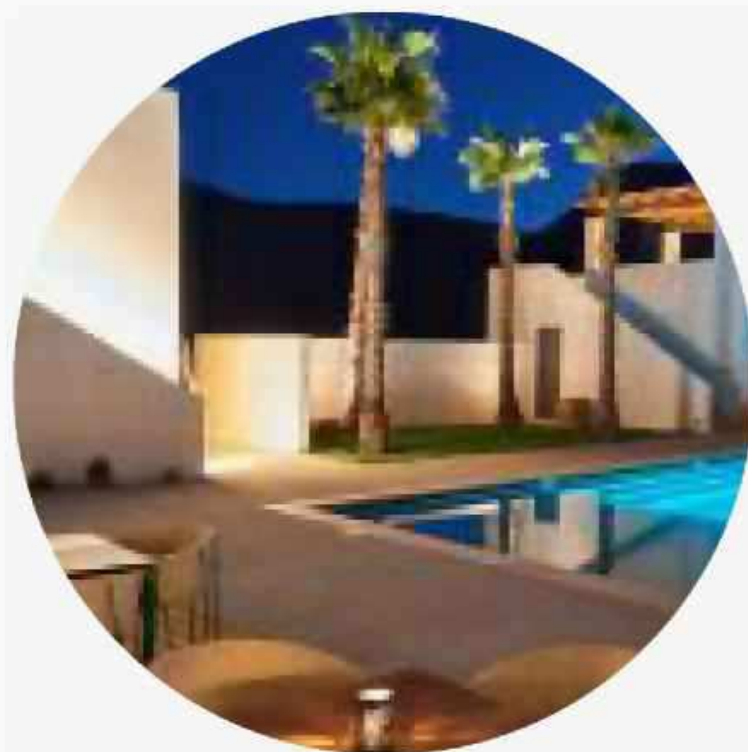
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DESERT BIGHORN CAPTURE AND RELEASE

Recently Safari Club International was fortunate to be selected



to cover a live capture and release of 30 Desert Bighorn sheep. We were able to capture the entire event and present a small teaser gallery of just a few of the images taken during the capture and release...

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GET THE FACTS WITH SCI CONVENTION SEMINARS

FEATURED VIDEO

The 45th Annual SCI Convention is coming in February. This year's convention promises to be bigger and better than ever! SCI President Larry Higgins offers a personal invitation!

Larry Higgins SCI 45th Anniversary Invita



In addition to the great evening



entertainment and the great deals to be found on the exhibit floor, the seminars at the annual SCI Convention are a treasure trove of great information and hunt enhancing tips that everyone attending the convention should take in.

Here is just a sample of the exciting and informative seminars on tap for the 45th Annual SCI Convention...

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MOJAVE YOUTH HUNT 2016 REPORT: A TOTAL SUCCESS!

After months of preparation, taking reservations, ordering supplies and



coordinating vendors, the big day for the Mojave Youth Hunt arrived. First on the scene was Water for Wildlife volunteers who arrived on Wednesday to canvas the area and make...

Continue reading [Mojave Youth Hunt 2016](#)

[Report: A Total Success! →](#)



SMOKIN' OUT THE CUBAN MYSTIQUE

Mar 06, 2013

Invariably, whenever cigars are handed out – whether over cocktails at an SCI Convention or around a campfire after a hunt – someone will ask, “Are these Cuban?”

Sometimes it's in jest, but often it's out of curiosity. After all, ever since the February 7, 1962 embargo, which the Cubans refer to as *el bloqueo* (the blockade), Havana cigars have been illegal for U.S. citizens to purchase or possess. But because we want what we can't have, the embargo has put Cuban cigars on everybody's “most wanted” list. But then, Cuban cigars have been in vogue ever since Columbus sailed into the Bahia de Gibara and discovered this fabled leaf being smoked by Taino Indians.



Until Castro's nationalization of Cuba's cigar industry forced families to flee their homeland and reestablish cigar-making in other countries, practically every cigar – even inexpensive machine made stogies – was made with at least some Cuban tobacco. Of

course, hand rolled premium cigars with wrappers, binders and fillers composed of 100% Cuban leaf represented society's most sophisticated smoke. Names such as Punch, Partagás, and Montecristo were *de rigueur* in the humidors of connoisseurs.



There is usually an earthy sweetness to Cuban tobacco, and the texture of the leaf and construction of the cigar should be flawless.

There is usually an earthy sweetness to Cuban tobacco, and the texture of the leaf and construction of the cigar should be flawless.

The embargo changed all that practically overnight, and Cuban cigars still remaining on tobacconists' shelves were quickly snatched up. Many non-Cuban cigar companies, caught off guard, began paying dramatically higher prices for what few bales of Cuban tobacco were still stored in American warehouses. As an example, before the embargo, Cuban tobacco sold for \$150 a bale. After 1962, the price shot up to \$1,000. Other companies, having suspected an embargo was imminent, had begun stockpiling Cuban tobacco and began judiciously rationing it for their non-Cuban brands. As an example, until the early 1970s, the post-embargo Honduran-made Hoyo de Monterrey (not to be confused with the older Cuban cigar of the same name) still advertised "real Cuban tobacco" in its filler blend. Of course, in time, all of this pre-embargo leaf was depleted.

The result has been that while the rest of the world can obtain Cuban cigars, American citizens cannot. Not legally, that is. Which is why one of the first things many cigar smokers seek out while away from their native soil is a Cuban cigar. It's no secret that goose hunters returning to the U.S. from Canada will pay highly taxed prices just to obtain a Cohiba Esplendido, and hope they don't get pinched at the border by the local

gen'darms. Coming back from a dove hunt in Mexico, however, unless you buy your Cubans from a reputable source such as Cuba's La Casa del Habano franchises, there's a good chance your "Havanas" will be counterfeit, made with non-Cuban tobaccos.



All of this, spurred on by the embargo, has created a thriving black market in America for both real and not-so-real Cuban cigars. After all, while most of us can spot a reblued rifle, after more than fifty years of the embargo, there are now multiple generations of cigar smokers who have never tasted an authentic Cuban cigar, and consequently, don't know how to spot a fake. As a result, the majority of "Cuban" cigars brought into the US are phonies.

So how do you tell? First, Cuban cigars are made of one hundred percent Cuban leaf with different tastes and strengths, ranging from the relatively mild Cuaba to the thundering Bolivar. Plus, there is usually an earthy sweetness to Cuban tobacco. And the texture of the leaf and the construction of the cigar should be flawless. But the fact is, not all Cuban cigars are created equal. Because Cuba is a Communist country and cigars represent 25% of that nation's income, there is pressure to produce as many cigars as possible to satisfy worldwide demand. That means some cigars may be rolled too tightly, or composed of tobacco that hasn't been properly aged. And should you possess such a cigar in America – unlike Dominican or Honduran products, for example – you can't return or exchange it because Havanas are contraband. That means they will be confiscated by customs if spotted when you are reentering the U.S., and you could be flagged as a "smuggler." Of course, many take the risk, noting that there are no Cuban tobacco-sniffing dogs employed by U.S. Customs.

You didn't read this here, but the best places to buy Cuban cigars are London, Geneva, and Spain, which get the best selections. But be sure to buy from a reputable tobacconist, as it

is even possible to find counterfeit Havanas in Cuba. Stay away from street vendors and it doesn't hurt to be a little suspicious of the hotel doorman as well.

Even with these caveats, the lure of the Havana cigar is too strong for many to resist, for just as there are those who will only drink French wine, much of the world will only smoke Cuban cigars. Consequently, Havana has priced their exclusive product accordingly, with most brands selling for \$20-\$40 each. By contrast, premium non-Cuban cigars sell, on average, for \$8-\$15 apiece. Thus, if you want to smoke a Havana, you literally have to pay the price.



And yet, there is nothing quite like firing up a Cuban cigar to celebrate a successful hunt, a good scotch, or a winning game. For when they are good, Cuban cigars represent the epitome of the cigar roller's art. But when poorly made, they are an abomination of a 500-year-old craft.

Twelve hours before he declared the Cuban embargo, President Kennedy sent his press secretary, Pierre Salinger out to round up one thousand H. Upmann Petite Coronas. Once the boxes were obtained, Kennedy signed his historic executive order. One wonders if today the President wouldn't have had Salinger go out and buy some boxes of Nicaraguan cigars instead. That way, if any were defective, he could return them. – Richard Carleton Hacker



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CUBA



Trump Administration Announces New Restrictions on Cuba Travel And Commerce

NOVEMBER 8, 2017 | By [Peter Kornbluh](#)





Photo: Raul E. Diego/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

President Trump in June in Miami, when he first announced his sweeping changes to America's Cuba policy.

More than 80 Cuban Hotels Off Limits To Americans Starting Tomorrow



The Trump Administration today tightened restrictions on the ability of U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba and U.S. businesses to conduct commercial transactions with state-owned companies on the island.

"We have strengthened our Cuba policies to channel economic activity away from the Cuban military and to encourage the government to move toward greater political and economic freedom for the Cuban people," said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, in announcing the changes.

The new rules have been expected [since last June when President Trump signed a National Security Presidential Memorandum](#) on "Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba."

The new regulations do not affect the ability for U.S. travelers to bring back Cuban cigars and certain kinds of rum, "as long as you fit into the revised travel categories," a Treasury Department official informed reporters during a White House background briefing. Current regulations allow travelers to "return to the United States with alcohol and/or tobacco products acquired in Cuba as accompanied baggage for personal use," [according to an FAQ page posted on the Treasury Department website](#), as well as to purchase them in third-party countries and bring them back to the U.S., so long as they are not resold in the U.S.

The new regulations, though, will restrict cigar aficionados from buying Cohibas, Romeo y Julietas, Montecristos and other famous tobacco brands in some of Cuba's renowned cigar shops—among them the La Casa del Habano in the Conde de Villanueva Hotel, and [the Cohiba Atmosphere Club in the luxurious new Gran Hotel Manzana Kempinski Hotel](#). Nor will they be able to smoke them while drinking mojitos made with Ron Varadero or Ron Caney rum at Ernest Hemingway's favorite hangout in old Havana, the Hotel Ambos Mundos.

As of November 9, when the Trump regulations go into effect, those hotels and more than 80 others across the

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island, along with those liquor brands, will be off-limits to U.S. travelers and businesses. This is because they appear on the new "Cuba Restricted List" of companies and agencies administered by the military-run Grupo de Administracion Empresarial S.A. [GAESA] corporation.

Besides hotels, the "List of Entities and Subentities Associated with Cuba" names tourism companies, government offices, stores and other commercial agencies across the island with which U.S. travelers and business interests can no longer conduct any type of commercial or financial transaction, including renting rooms, eating and drinking, and purchasing products or services.

The Department of State, **which compiled the list**, considers these entities to be under the control of "the Cuban military, intelligence, or security services or personnel with which direct financial transactions would disproportionately benefit such services or personnel at the expense of the Cuban people or private enterprise in Cuba."

U.S. officials told reporters, however, that travel arrangements and commercial contracts made prior to the publication of the list would be grandfathered in and allowed to proceed, "consistent with the Administration's interest in avoiding negative impacts on American business and travelers."

New Restrictions on Travel

The goals of the new regulations, officials said, were to enforce compliance with U.S. laws on the trade embargo and "statutory restrictions on tourism." Indeed, the regulations effectively **end the Obama-era effort to open engagement with Cuba** by allowing U.S. citizens to designate themselves as "people-to-people" and "educational" travelers—two of the categories under which individuals could legally visit the island. Under Trump's rules, however, "individual people-to-people nonacademic educational travel will no longer be authorized" and visitors must now travel with approved tour and education providers.

In the face of strong criticism that terminating individual travel will hurt Cuban private sector entrepreneurs—Airbnb homeowners, private restaurateurs, taxi drivers, guides, among them—the Trump administration appeared to open the door to some individual travel under the "Support for the Cuban People" category. If such travelers engaged in full-time activities "that result in meaningful interaction with individuals in Cuba," including renting rooms in private residences, eating at paladares, and shopping at privately owned stores, they could legally visit Cuba, according to the new regulations. But they also state that "in order to meet the requirement of a full-time schedule, a traveler must engage in additional authorized Support for the Cuban People activities"—a vague requirement likely to deter large numbers of individual U.S. citizens from taking this route to Cuba.

The number of U.S. visitors to Cuba has already taken a hit from a strong "travel advisory" **issued by the Trump administration in late September** in response to health problems suffered by a small number of U.S. embassy personnel and several other visitors earlier this year. Advocates of free travel to Cuba predicted that the new



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uncertainty around what travelers can and cannot do in Cuba would further curtail the number of visitors to the island, severely hurting Cuba's growing private sector which caters to their business.

"These new regulations create a more convoluted, confusing and counterproductive approach to Cuba policy," said James Williams of Engage Cuba, a business association that lobbies for free trade and travel with Cuba. "This Keystone Cops' Cuba policy hurts those it claims to help and helps those it claims to hurt." Williams characterized the new rules as a "kick in the gut to Cuban entrepreneurs" which would "only make it harder for Americans to travel to Cuba and support the growing private sector."

Despite the new obstacles, U.S. tour companies emphasized that it remained legal to travel to Cuba as well as advance business interests there. "There remain countless ways to legally visit the island," according to Collin Lavery, president of Cuba Educational Travel, "and there are many fully compliant avenues for doing business" in Cuba.

MORE IN CUBA

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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD**

In the matter of Trademark Registration No. 1147309

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: February 17, 1981

AND

In the matter of the Trademark Registration No. 1898273

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: June 6, 1995

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| ----- | X | |
| EMPRESA CUBANA DEL TABACO, d.b.a. | : | |
| CUBATABACO, | : | |
| | : | |
| Petitioner, | : | |
| | : | Cancellation No. 92025859 |
| v. | : | |
| | : | |
| GENERAL CIGAR CO., INC., | : | |
| | : | |
| Respondent. | : | |
| | : | |
| ----- | X | |

Steven Abbot – Annex T



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A. LIGA PRIVADA T52

| FULL | | Nicaragua | | Habano Wrapper | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 54) | 24 | \$314.40 | \$282.96 | J31265 |
| | | 10 | | \$122.90 | J31266 |
| TORO | (6" x 52) | 24 | \$343.92 | \$309.53 | J31275 |
| | | 10 | | \$133.97 | J31276 |
| BELICOSO | (6" x 52) | 24 | \$373.44 | \$336.10 | J31245 |
| | | 10 | | \$145.04 | J31246 |
| CORONA DOBLE* | (7" x 54) | 24 | \$403.44 | \$363.10 | J31255 |
| | | 10 | | \$156.29 | J31256 |

B. HERRERA ESTELI

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | Habano Wrapper | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------|----------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| CORONA GORDA (4-7/8" x 46) | | 25 | \$204.50 | \$159.51 | J32375 |
| | | 5 | | \$34.40 | J32373 |
| ROBUSTO EXTRA (5-1/4" x 52) | | 25 | \$227.50 | \$177.45 | J32385 |
| | | 5 | | \$37.99 | J32383 |
| PIRAMIDE FINO* (6" x 52) | | 25 | \$270.00 | \$210.60 | J32415 |
| | | 5 | | \$44.62 | J32413 |
| TORO ESPECIAL (6" x 52) | | 25 | \$242.50 | \$189.15 | J32405 |
| | | 5 | | \$40.33 | J32403 |

C. FLORIDA SUN GROWN

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | Brazilian Wrapper | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 54) | 20 | \$222.00 | \$199.80 | J79675 |
| TORO | (6" x 52) | 20 | \$252.00 | \$226.80 | J79695 |
| LIMITED PRESS | (6" x 54) | 10 | \$146.00 | \$131.40 | J79665 |
| SIXTY | (6" x 60) | 20 | \$292.00 | \$262.80 | J79685 |
| BELICOSO | (6-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$272.00 | \$244.80 | J79655 |

D. PAPPY VAN WINKLE

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | Oscuro Wrapper | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| CORONA | (4" x 46) | 10 | \$146.00 | \$131.40 | J79575 |
| BELICOSO | (5" x 50) | 10 | \$246.00 | \$221.40 | J79555 |
| ROBUSTO* | (5-1/2" x 54) | 10 | \$216.00 | \$194.40 | J79585 |
| TORO | (6" x 50) | 10 | \$236.00 | \$212.40 | J79595 |

E. HERRERA NORTEÑO

| FULL | | Nicaragua | Maduro Wrapper | | Item # |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|---------|--------|
| Shape/Size | | Qty. | Comp | ONLY | |
| CORONA EXTRA | (4-1/4" x 48) | 10 | \$102 | \$79.56 | J44768 |
| ROBUSTO GRANDE* | (5-1/2" x 54) | 10 | \$123 | \$95.94 | J44778 |
| TORO ESPECIAL | (6" x 50) | 10 | \$118 | \$92.04 | J44788 |

F. UNDERCROWN SUN GROWN

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | Sungrown Wrapper | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/Size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| FLYING PIG* | (3-3/4" x 60) | 12 | \$152.64 | \$119.06 | J79735 |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 54) | 25 | \$202.00 | \$157.56 | J79765 |
| CORONA | (5-5/8" x 46) | 25 | \$195.00 | \$152.10 | J79715 |
| GRAN TORO | (6" x 52) | 25 | \$215.50 | \$168.09 | J79755 |
| BELICOSO | (6" x 52) | 25 | \$236.00 | \$184.08 | J79705 |
| GORDITO* | (6" x 60) | 25 | \$270.00 | \$210.60 | J79745 |
| CORONA DOBLE | (7" x 54) | 25 | \$249.50 | \$194.61 | J79725 |

G. UNDERCROWN SHADE

| MEDIUM | | Nicaragua | Connecticut Wrapper | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|---------------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 54) | 25 | \$200.00 | \$156.00 | J08395 |
| | | 5 | | \$33.70 | J08393 |
| CORONA | (5-5/8" x 46) | 25 | \$193.50 | \$150.93 | J21705 |
| | | 5 | | \$32.69 | J21703 |
| GRAN TORO | (6" x 52) | 25 | \$213.00 | \$166.14 | J08385 |
| | | 5 | | \$35.73 | J08383 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 48) | 25 | \$222.50 | \$173.55 | J68465 |
| CORONA DOBLE* | (7" x 54) | 25 | \$241.50 | \$188.37 | J08365 |
| | | 5 | | \$40.17 | J08363 |

H. UNDERCROWN

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | Maduro Wrapper | | Item # |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | |
| FLYING PIG | (3-3/4" x 60) | 12 | \$149.64 | \$116.72 | J44758 |
| CORONA VIVA | (5-5/8" x 46) | 25 | \$195.00 | \$152.10 | J21708 |
| BELICOSO | (6" x 52) | 25 | \$236.00 | \$184.08 | J08358 |
| GORDITO | (6" x 60) | 25 | \$270.00 | \$210.60 | J08378 |
| CHURCHILL* | (7" x 48) | 25 | \$236.00 | \$184.08 | J68438 |
| CORONA DOBLE | (7" x 54) | 25 | \$249.50 | \$194.61 | J08368 |



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|---|--|--|---|
| SMOOTH / MEDIUM ROMEO y JULIETA  RESERVA REAL Robusto (5" x 52) Connecticut Wrapper R44722 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM PERDOMO  RESERVE CHAMPAGNE CONNECTICUT Robusto (5" x 54) Connecticut Wrapper R54418 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  VINTAGE 1992 Churchill (7" x 48) Sumatra Wrapper R66052 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM CAMACHO  Robusto (5" x 50) Connecticut Wrapper J30460 |
| SMOOTH / MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  VINTAGE 1999 Churchill (7" x 48) Connecticut Wrapper R66042 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM MONTECRISTO  CLASSIC Toro (6" x 52) Connecticut Wrapper J52310 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM FRATELLO  ORO Robusto (5" x 50) Connecticut Wrapper J61793 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM OLIVA  CONNECTICUT RESERVE Robusto (5" x 50) Connecticut Wrapper R95237 |
| SMOOTH / MEDIUM GRAYWOLF by GRAYCLIFF  Churchill (7" x 52) Connecticut Wrapper J51030 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM ZINO PLATINUM  GRAND MASTER Robusto (5-1/2" x 52) Connecticut Wrapper R76010 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM PUNCH  Pita (5-1/8" x 50) EMS Wrapper R34490 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM PARTAGAS  NATURALES Robusto (5-1/2" x 50) Connecticut Wrapper R38716 |
| SMOOTH / MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  VINTAGE 2003 Robusto (5-1/2" x 50) Cameroon Wrapper N14540 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  EDGE LITE Toro (6" x 52) Connecticut Wrapper R70744 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM MACANUDO  GOLD LABEL Robusto (5-1/2" x 50) Connecticut Wrapper J05480 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM OLIVA  SERIE G Robusto (4-1/2" x 50) Cameroon Wrapper R62982 |
| SMOOTH / MEDIUM NUB by Oliva  #460 Rothschild (4" x 58) Connecticut Wrapper R40412 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM MACANUDO  CAFE HYDE PARK Robusto (5-1/2" x 49) Connecticut Wrapper R69210 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM EMPRESS OF CUBA  Toro (6" x 52) Connecticut Wrapper J56132 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM LA GLORIA CUBANA  SERIE R #5 Robusto (5-1/2" x 54) EMS Wrapper R21921 |

2-FER ~~\$165.45~~
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 10 cigars - two 5-packs

3-FER ~~\$245.45~~
\$69⁹⁶ **SAVE UP TO 72%***
 15 cigars - three 5-packs

4-FER ~~\$319.95~~
\$84⁹⁶ **SAVE UP TO 73%***
 20 cigars - four 5-packs

*based on an average retail price of all 5-packs
MUST BE DIFFERENT 5-PACKS



MACANUDO INSPIRADO WHITE
SMOOTH / MEDIUM
 Robusto (5" x 50)
 Connecticut Wrapper **J79073**

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| SMOOTH / MEDIUM MONTECRISTO  #3 Coróna (5-1/2" x 44) Natural Wrapper R03364 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM C.A.O.  GOLD Robusto (5" x 50) Connecticut Wrapper R38904 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM NUB by Oliva  CAFE CAPPUCCINO Gordito (4" x 60) Connecticut Wrapper J41840 | SMOOTH / MEDIUM COHIBA  RED DOT Robusto (5" x 50) Cameroon Wrapper J69193 |
| MEDIUM MACANUDO  ESPECIAL Toro (6" x 52) Habano Wrapper J10540 | MEDIUM ACID  TOAST Toro (6" x 50) Maduro Wrapper J08302 | MEDIUM AGING ROOM  LA BOHEME PITTORE Robusto (5-1/4" x 52) Habano Wrapper J41470 | MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  THE EDGE Toro (6" x 52) Corajo Wrapper R63686 |
| MEDIUM JAVA by Drew Estate  Robusto (5-1/2" x 50) Maduro Wrapper J49698 | MEDIUM LA PALINA  BLACK LABEL Toro (6" x 50) Brazilian Wrapper J42753 | MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  DECADE Robusto (5" x 50) Sumatra Wrapper R72956 | MEDIUM SAN CRISTOBAL  ELEGANCIA IMPERIAL Toro (6" x 52) Connecticut Wrapper J09630 |
| MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  20TH ANNIVERSARY Toro (6" x 52) Natural Wrapper J49635 | MEDIUM LA GLORIA CUBANA  SERIE R BLACK #58 Dbl Gordo (6-7/8" x 58) Nicaraguan Wrapper J28583 | MEDIUM ACID  KUBA KUBA Robusto (5" x 54) Maduro Wrapper R17214 | MEDIUM ROMEO y JULIETA  ANIVERSARIO Robusto (5" x 54) Maduro Wrapper J58591 |

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ROMEO 505 NICARAGUA

MEDIUM / FULL

Toro (6" x 54)

Habano Wrapper J77251

2-FER ~~\$165.45~~
\$54.96 SAVE UP TO **67%***
 10 cigars - two 5-packs

3-FER ~~\$245.45~~
\$69.96 SAVE UP TO **72%***
 15 cigars - three 5-packs

4-FER ~~\$319.95~~
\$84.96 SAVE UP TO **73%***
 20 cigars - four 5-packs

*based on an average retail price of all 5-packs
MUST BE DIFFERENT 5-PACKS

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| MEDIUM AVO  SYNCRITMO Toro (6" x 54) Ecuadorian Wrapper J78210 | MEDIUM ZINO  Z CLASS 550 R Robusto (4-7/8" x 50) Natural Wrapper J16290 | MEDIUM FRATELLO  Corona (5-1/2" x 46) Habano Wrapper J61713 | MEDIUM HEADLEY GRANGE  ESTUPENDOS Robusto (5-1/2" x 52) Sumatra Wrapper J36200 |
| MEDIUM HERRERA ESTELI  REVELATION Toro (6" x 52) Natural Wrapper J32402 | MEDIUM CORNELIUS & ANTHONY  MERIDIAN Robusto (5" x 52) Habano Wrapper J78413 | MEDIUM BRICK HOUSE  Robusto (5" x 54) Natural Wrapper R91520 | MEDIUM PADRON  2000 Robusto (5" x 50) Maduro Wrapper N82158 |
| MEDIUM NUB by Oliva  #460 Rothschild (4" x 60) Habano Wrapper R80832 | MEDIUM ALEC BRADLEY  PRENSADO Robusto (5" x 50) Corojo Wrapper R91706 | MEDIUM ROCKY PATEL  EDGE Toro (6" x 52) Sumatra Wrapper J49655 | MEDIUM / FULL 601  RED LABEL Robusto (5" x 50) Habano Wrapper R70833 |
| MEDIUM / FULL PUNCH  RARE COROJO Magnum (5-1/4" x 54) Corojo Wrapper R42500 | MEDIUM / FULL CAMACHO  Robusto (5" x 50) Maduro Wrapper J31082 | MEDIUM / FULL ROC Y PATEL  VINTAGE 1990 Churchill (7" x 48) Maduro Wrapper R66049 | MEDIUM / FULL ALEC BRADLEY  PRENSADO LOST ART Robusto (5" x 52) Honduran Wrapper J78973 |

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|--|---|---|---|
| MEDIUM / FULL ROCKY PATEL  THE EDGE Toro (6" x 52) Maduro Wrapper R63689 | MEDIUM / FULL ALEC BRADLEY  TEMPUS Centuria (7" x 49) Natural Wrapper R91716 | MEDIUM / FULL C.A.O.  BRAZILIA GOL (5" x 56) Brazilian Wrapper R38186 | MEDIUM / FULL ROCKY PATEL  SUNGROWN Toro (6-1/2" x 52) Maduro Wrapper J51803 |
| MEDIUM / FULL BRICK HOUSE  MIGHTY MIGHTY Gordo (6-1/4" x 60) Maduro Wrapper R99192 | MEDIUM / FULL ROMEO BY RJ  ROMEO Toro (6" x 54) Habano Wrapper J20270 | MEDIUM / FULL PARTAGAS  BLACK LABEL Robusto (5-1/4" x 54) Sungrown Wrapper R34430 | MEDIUM / FULL COHIBA  NICARAGUA Robusto (5" x 50) Nicaraguan Wrapper J42020 |
| MEDIUM / FULL MACANUDO  INSPIRADO BLACK Robusto (5" x 40) Maduro Wrapper J79072 | MEDIUM / FULL MONTECRISTO  PEPE MENDEZ PILOTICO Toro (6-1/4" x 60) Ecuadorian Wrapper J63940 | MEDIUM / FULL AVO  SYNCRONICARAGUA Toro (6" x 54) Ecuadorian Wrapper J52180 | MEDIUM / FULL OLIVA  MASTER BLENDS 3 Robusto (5" x 50) Nicaraguan Wrapper J08793 |
| MEDIUM / FULL CORNELIUS & ANTHONY  DADDY MAC Robusto (5" x 52) Brazilian Wrapper J78393 | MEDIUM / FULL CASA FERNANDEZ  MIAMI RESERVA Toro (6" x 54) Maduro Wrapper J32150 | MEDIUM / FULL LA AROMA de CUBA  MI AMOR Belicoso (5-1/2" x 54) Habano Wrapper J04012 | MEDIUM / FULL ROCKY PATEL  SUNGROWN Toro (6-1/2" x 52) Sungrown Wrapper R54723 |
| MEDIUM / FULL ALEC BRADLEY  BLACK MARKET Perfecto (6-3/4" x 54) Sungrown Wrapper J15963 | MEDIUM / FULL MONTECRISTO  MONTE Conde (5-1/2" x 48) Habano Wrapper J32040 | MEDIUM / FULL ROCKY PATEL  15TH ANNIVERSARY Robusto (5" x 50) Habano Wrapper J49685 | MEDIUM / FULL C.A.O.  CONSIGLIERE ASSOCIATE Robusto (5" x 52) Brazilian Wrapper J59640 |



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A. ROMEO by Romeo y Julieta

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Dominican Republic | | Habano Wrapper | |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 54) | 20 | \$170.40 | \$153.40 | J20265 | |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 20 | \$177.00 | \$159.40 | J20275 | |
| PIRAMIDES* (6-1/8" x 52) | 20 | \$184.60 | \$166.20 | J20255 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 56) | 20 | \$190.20 | \$171.20 | J20245 | |

B. ROMEO AGING ROOM by Aging Room

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Habano Wrapper | |
|--------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| COPLA (5" x 48) | 20 | \$230 | \$207.00 | J47955 | |
| CANTAOR* (6" x 52) | 20 | \$245 | \$220.50 | J49525 | |

C. ROMEO y JULIETA ANIVERSARIO

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|---------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 54) | 20 | \$144.40 | \$119.95 | J58598 | |
| MAGNUM (6" x 60) | 20 | \$153.60 | \$124.95 | J58588 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 58) | 20 | \$155.00 | \$129.95 | J58578 | |

D. ROMEO y JULIETA VINTAGE

| SMOOTH | | Dominican Republic | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|-------------------------|---------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| VINTAGE I (6" x 43) | 25 5 | \$201.50 | \$145.00 \$31.50 | R11695 R11696 | |
| VINTAGE II (6" x 46) | 25 5 | \$214.50 | \$154.50 \$33.40 | R11705 R11706 | |
| VINTAGE III (5" x 50) | 25 5 | \$225.25 | \$162.25 \$35.95 | R11715 R11716 | |
| VINTAGE V (7-1/2" x 50) | 25 5 | \$250.25 | \$180.25 \$38.55 | R11725 R11726 | |

E. 1875

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Sumatra Wrapper | |
|------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| BULLY* (5" x 50) | 25 | \$169.50 | \$122.00 | R11925 | |
| CEDRO #2 (5-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$168.00 | \$121.00 | R11885 | |
| | 10 | | \$53.40 | R11886 | |
| BELICOSO (6-1/8" x 54) | 25 | \$214.00 | \$154.00 | R27605 | |
| | 10 | | \$66.60 | R27606 | |
| CEDRO #1 (6-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$184.75 | \$132.75 | R11905 | |
| | 10 | | \$58.10 | R11906 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 25 | \$192.50 | \$138.50 | R11935 | |
| | 10 | | \$60.40 | R11936 | |

F. RESERVA REAL

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dom. Rep. | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|-------------------------------|------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 54) | 25 | \$188.00 | \$169.25 | R44725 | |
| VERONA'S COURT* (5-1/2" x 44) | 20 | \$158.40 | \$142.60 | R44695 | |
| | 10 | | \$76.30 | R44696 | |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 25 | \$196.25 | \$176.50 | R44735 | |
| LONSDALE (6-5/8" x 44) | 25 | \$188.00 | \$169.25 | R44705 | |
| | 10 | | \$72.70 | R44706 | |
| PORTO REAL (7" x 36) | 20 | \$158.40 | \$142.60 | R44715 | |
| | 10 | | \$76.30 | R44716 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 25 | \$200.00 | \$180.00 | R44745 | |

G. ROMEO y JULIETA RESERVE

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | | Natural Wrapper | |
|------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO* (5" x 54) | 27 | \$165.51 | \$119.07 | R72505 | |
| | 10 | | \$49.10 | R72506 | |
| CORONA (5-5/8" x 45) | 27 | \$143.37 | \$103.14 | R72495 | |
| | 10 | | \$43.20 | R72496 | |
| TORO (6" x 56) | 27 | \$170.37 | \$122.85 | R72515 | |
| | 10 | | \$50.50 | R72516 | |
| BELICOSO (6-1/8" x 52) | 27 | \$185.22 | \$133.38 | R72475 | |
| | 10 | | \$54.40 | R72476 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 54) | 27 | \$192.78 | \$138.78 | R72485 | |
| | 10 | | \$56.40 | R72486 | |

H. 1875 CLUB SELECTION

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Sumatra Wrapper | |
|---------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 20 | \$185.00 | \$109.95 | J58525 | |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 20 | \$195.00 | \$114.95 | J58535 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 20 | \$195.00 | \$119.95 | J58515 | |

I. RESERVA MADURO

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Dominican Republic | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| #4 (5" x 44) | 27 | \$168.75 | \$121.50 | R85948 | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 54) | 27 | \$199.26 | \$143.37 | R41738 | |
| | 10 | | \$58.10 | R41739 | |
| TORO (6" x 50) | 27 | \$216.54 | \$156.06 | R41798 | |
| BELICOSO (6-1/8" x 52) | 27 | \$248.67 | \$179.01 | R85958 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 27 | \$232.47 | \$167.40 | R77748 | |



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MEDIUM

Dominican Republic

Cameroon Wrapper



**Cigar Aficionado
2015 TOP 25**

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|--------------|---------------|---------|----------|--------|
| ROBUSTO* | (5-1/4" x 50) | 25 | \$240.00 | R11045 |
| | | 10 | \$86.60 | R11046 |
| #3 | (5-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$221.25 | R11055 |
| | | 10 | \$80.23 | R11056 |
| DBL. ROBUSTO | (5-3/4" x 52) | 25 | \$258.75 | R85015 |
| #2 | (6" x 55) | 25 | \$315.00 | R84985 |
| PRESIDENTE | (6-1/2" x 50) | 25 | \$277.50 | R85025 |

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ARTURO FUENTE **SMOOTH / MEDIUM** Dominican Republic Choice of Wrapper

EXQUISITO (4-1/2" x 33)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|-------|----------|--------|
| Nat. | 50 | \$125 | \$108.75 | R19675 |
| Mad. | 50 | \$125 | \$108.75 | R19678 |

CHATEAU FUENTE (4-1/2" x 50)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|----------|---------|--------|
| Nat. | 20 | \$107.00 | \$93.09 | N19655 |
| | 10 | | \$51.55 | R02725 |
| Mad. | 20 | \$107.00 | \$93.09 | N19688 |
| | 10 | | \$51.55 | R02728 |
| Sun. | 20 | \$107.00 | \$93.09 | R14065 |
| | 10 | | \$51.55 | R14066 |

CHATEAU FUENTE QUEEN B

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------------------------|------|----------|---------|--------|
| Belicoso (5-1/2" x 52) | | | | |
| Sun. | 18 | \$114.30 | \$99.44 | R90425 |
| | 5 | | \$30.12 | R90423 |

CUBAN BELICOSO (5-3/4" x 52)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| Sun. | 24 | \$158.40 | \$137.81 | R87575 |
| | 6 | | \$37.45 | R87576 |

8-5-8 (6" x 47)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| Nat. | 25 | \$141.25 | \$122.89 | N06755 |
| | 10 | | \$54.16 | R02855 |
| Mad. | 25 | \$141.25 | \$122.89 | N06788 |
| | 10 | | \$54.16 | R02858 |

CHATEAU FUENTE KING B

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|-------------------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| Torpedo (6" x 55) | | | | |
| Sun. | 18 | \$148.50 | \$126.06 | R78705 |
| | 6 | | \$45.02 | R78706 |

CORONA IMPERIAL (6-1/2" x 46)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| Nat. | 25 | \$142.50 | \$123.98 | R11445 |
| Mad. | 25 | \$142.50 | \$123.98 | R11448 |

SELECCION PRIVADA #1 (6-3/4" x 50)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| Nat. | 25 | \$142.50 | \$123.98 | N06855 |
| | 10 | | \$54.59 | R02755 |
| Mad. | 25 | \$142.50 | \$123.98 | N06888 |
| | 10 | | \$54.59 | R02758 |

CHURCHILL (7-1/2" x 48)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| Nat. | 25 | \$161.25 | \$140.29 | N07055 |
| | 10 | | \$61.12 | R02735 |
| Mad. | 25 | \$161.25 | \$140.29 | N07088 |
| | 10 | | \$61.12 | R02738 |

SELECCION D'ORO (7-1/4" x 48)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|-------|------|-------|----------|--------|
| Conn. | 25 | \$150 | \$130.50 | N70055 |
| | 10 | | \$57.20 | R05885 |

ROYAL SALUTE (7-5/8" x 54)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------|------|---------|---------|--------|
| Sun. | 10 | \$80.00 | \$69.60 | R10955 |
| | 5 | | \$37.30 | R10953 |

CAÑONES (8-1/2" x 52)

| Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|-----------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| Drk. Nat. | 20 | \$160.00 | \$139.20 | R01335 |
| | 10 | | \$74.60 | R02845 |
| Mad. | 20 | \$160.00 | \$139.20 | R01338 |
| | 10 | | \$74.60 | R02848 |

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CURLY HEAD DELUXE

(6-1/2" x 43) Box of 25

SMOOTH / MEDIUM

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Dominican Republic | Compare |
| Maduro R07865 | \$80.00 |
| Natural R11535 | ONLY \$69.60 |

CURLY HEAD

(6-1/2" x 43) Box of 40

SMOOTH / MEDIUM

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Dominican Republic | Compare |
| Natural N07755 | \$114.00 |
| Candela R07733 | ONLY \$99.18 |

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HEMINGWAY

THE SHORT STORY is a 4" x 49 Perfecto; smooth-medium bodied Dominican cigar with a golden Cameroon or dark Maduro wrapper.

THE BEST SELLER combines select Dominican fillers with a silky Cameroon or sweet Maduro wrapper in a 4-1/2" x 55 variation of the classic Perfecto shape.

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HEMINGWAY

SMOOTH / MEDIUM

| Shape/size | Qty | Comp. | Dom. Republic ONLY | Choice of Wrapper |
|---------------------------|-----|----------|--------------------|-------------------|
| SHORT STORY* (4" x 49) | 25 | \$148.75 | \$129.41 | R78695 Cameroon |
| | 10 | | \$56.76 | R78696 Maduro |
| BEST SELLER (4-1/2" x 55) | 25 | \$175.00 | \$152.25 | R78715 Cameroon |
| MASTERPIECE (9" x 52) | 10 | \$145.00 | \$127.02 | R78685 Cameroon |
| | 5 | | \$66.01 | R78686 Maduro |

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Cigar genius Radhames Perez started with the beloved green Candela wrapper, a Connecticut leaf with a sweet flavor then added a smooth Connecticut or rich Maduro. Hand-rolled inside is a blend of Dominican Olor and Piloto Cubano long fillers.

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|------------------------|------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Can. | Conn. | Mad. |
| BABY (4" x 30) | 50 | \$82.95 | \$64.95 | R36475 | — | R36478 |
| BABY VANILLA (4" x 30) | 50 | \$82.95 | \$64.95 | R54825 | R54824 | R54828 |
| MAMA (5" x 38) | 20 | \$71.95 | \$52.95 | R36495 | R36494 | R36498 |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$72.95 | \$52.95 | R46845 | R46844 | R46848 |
| FAT (5-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$72.95 | \$53.95 | R36485 | R36484 | R36488 |
| LONSDALE (6-1/2" x 44) | 20 | \$70.95 | \$51.95 | R46855 | R46854 | R46858 |
| PAPA (7" x 48) | 20 | \$72.95 | \$53.95 | R36505 | R36504 | R36508 |

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A. PARTAGAS

| Shape/size | Qty. | Dominican Republic | | Cameroon Wrapper | |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|--|
| | | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| MINIATURAS (3-3/4" x 24) | 80 | \$111.90 | \$82.00 | R05195 | |
| PURITOS (4-1/4" x 32) | 100 | \$199.90 | \$152.50 | N11251 | |
| ROBUSTO* (4-1/2" x 49) | 25 | \$187.25 | \$115.88 | N12205 | |
| | 10 | | \$51.35 | N89955 | |
| NATURALES (5-1/2" x 49) | 25 | \$199.75 | \$123.69 | N12105 | |
| | 10 | | \$54.48 | N89855 | |
| #2 (5-3/4" x 43) | 25 | \$179.75 | \$110.88 | N12505 | |
| | 10 | | \$49.35 | N12506 | |
| SABROSOS (5-7/8" x 44) | 20 | \$159.80 | \$98.95 | N12305 | |
| #1 (6-3/4" x 43) | 25 | \$204.75 | \$126.81 | N11455 | |
| | 10 | | \$55.73 | N00055 | |
| FABULOSOS (7" x 52) | 25 | \$232.25 | \$143.38 | N37355 | |
| | 10 | | \$62.35 | N37356 | |

B. PARTAGAS BLACK LABEL

| Shape/size | Qty. | Dominican Republic | | Sungrown Wrapper | |
|--|------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|--|
| | | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| BRAVO (4-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$143.80 | \$109.20 | R34425 | |
| | 10 | | \$59.60 | R34426 | |
| CLASICO (5-1/4" x 54) | 20 | \$149.80 | \$113.70 | R34435 | |
| | 10 | | \$61.85 | R34436 | |
| CRYSTAL TUBES (5-1/2" x 50) (Box of 8 tubes) | 8 | \$71.92 | \$54.68 | R62795 | |
| MAXIMO (6" x 50) | 20 | \$169.80 | \$129.20 | R62785 | |
| | 10 | | \$69.60 | R62786 | |
| MAGNIFICO (6" x 54) | 20 | \$163.80 | \$124.70 | R34445 | |
| | 10 | | \$67.35 | R34446 | |
| PIRAMIDE* (6" x 60) | 20 | \$183.80 | \$138.95 | R34455 | |
| | 10 | | \$74.48 | R34456 | |
| GIGANTE (6" x 60) | 20 | \$179.80 | \$136.95 | R71925 | |
| | 10 | | \$73.48 | R71926 | |

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A. DON PEPÍN BLACK

DON PEPÍN GARCÍA BLACK CUBAN CLASSIC CONNECTICUT

SMOOTH / MEDIUM

Nicaragua

Connecticut Wrapper

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------------|------|---------|-----------------|--------|
| ROBUSTO* (5" x 50) | 12 | \$130 | \$89.95 | J46925 |
| TORO (6" x 50) | 12 | \$140 | \$99.95 | J46935 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 12 | \$150 | \$109.95 | J46945 |

B. FLOR DE LAS ANTILLAS

MEDIUM / FULL

Nicaragua

Sungrown Wrapper

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | Qty. | ONLY | Item # |
|--------------------------|------|-------|-----------------|--------|------|----------------|--------|
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$134 | \$120.60 | J19935 | 5 | \$32.65 | J19933 |
| BELICOSO (5-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$146 | \$131.40 | J19925 | 5 | \$35.35 | J19923 |
| TORO* (6" x 52) | 20 | \$149 | \$126.00 | J19945 | 5 | \$34.00 | J19943 |
| TORO GORDO (6-1/2" x 56) | 20 | \$176 | \$158.40 | J19955 | 5 | \$42.10 | J19953 |

C. FLOR DE LAS ANTILLAS MADURO

MEDIUM / FULL

Nicaragua

Maduro Wrapper

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|------------------------------|------|---------|-----------------|--------|
| PETITE ROBUSTO (4-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$148 | \$133.20 | J75648 |
| CORONA (5-5/8" x 46) | 20 | \$152 | \$136.80 | J75638 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | 20 | \$170 | \$153.00 | J75658 |
| TORPEDO (6-1/8" x 52) | 20 | \$180 | \$162.00 | J75678 |
| TORO GORDO (6-1/2" x 56) | 20 | \$206 | \$185.40 | J75668 |



40 CHURCHILLS 7" x 50

**ONLY
\$1.25**
Per Stick

Don Augusto Creamy Connecticut

Don Augusto cigars are crafted in the same Dominican factory as Don Osvaldos and are similar, except for their slightly smoother blend. This is a cigar created in the old world style, only utilizing hand-picked Dominican fillers and binders, draped in either a creamy Connecticut or dark, Maduro wrapper. It tastes even better coming in a value-loaded, 40-count pack, making it \$1.25 a stick.

DON AUGUSTO

SMOOTH

Dominican Republic

CHURCHILL (7" x 50) 40 Cigars

Choice of Wrapper:

Connecticut J45765 or Maduro J45768

Compare at \$82.95

ONLY \$49⁹⁵



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13



Rocky Patel



What cigar fanatic out there hasn't heard about or smoked a Rocky Patel cigar? I mean, let's face it, he is not called "THE MAN OF A MILLION BLENDS" for nothing.

A. WINTER COLLECTION 2012

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | WAS | SALE | Item # |
|------------------------|------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|--------|
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$156 | \$22.95 | \$84.95 | J12615 |
| TORPEDO* (6-1/8" x 52) | 20 | \$181 | \$110.00 | \$104.95 | J12635 |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$176 | \$109.05 | \$94.95 | J12625 |

B. OLDE WORLD RESERVE

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | WAS | SALE | Choice of Wrapper |
|-----------------------|------|-------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| TORPEDO* (5" x 54) | 20 | \$154 | \$104.05 | \$89.95 | J30878 |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$150 | \$93.99 | \$84.95 | J30858 |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$170 | \$104.50 | \$89.95 | J30868 |

C. 2008 AUTUMN COLLECTION

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | WAS | SALE | Choice of Wrapper |
|-----------------------|------|-------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$153 | \$90.05 | \$84.95 | R85205 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | 20 | \$177 | \$104.05 | \$89.95 | R85225 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 20 | \$177 | \$104.05 | \$89.95 | R85355 |
| SALOMON (7-1/2" x 58) | 20 | \$201 | \$100.05 | \$94.95 | R85215 |

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ASHTON SYMMETRY –

A silky Ecuador Habano wrapper unveils a perfectly aged merger of medium to full-bodied tobaccos from the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua.

A. SYMMETRY

MEDIUM / FULL

| Shape/size | Qty. | Dominican Republic | | Item # | Habano Wrapper | | Item # |
|-------------------------|------|--------------------|----------|--------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | Comp. | ONLY | | Qty. | ONLY | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 25 | \$386.25 | \$275.63 | J43795 | 10 | \$115.25 | J43796 |
| BELICOSO* (5-1/4" x 52) | 25 | \$312.50 | \$281.25 | J43825 | — | — | — |
| PRISM (5-3/4" x 46) | 25 | \$293.75 | \$264.38 | J43815 | 10 | \$110.75 | J43816 |
| SUBLIME (6" x 52) | 25 | \$318.75 | \$286.88 | J43805 | 10 | \$119.75 | J43806 |
| PRESTIGE (6-3/4" x 49) | 25 | \$325.00 | \$292.50 | J43785 | 10 | \$122.00 | J43786 |

ASHTON VSG –

For those who desire powerful flavor with a complex rich finish, look no further than the Ashton VSG.

B. VSG

FULL

| Shape/size | Qty. | Dominican Republic | | Item # | Sungrown Wrapper | | Item # |
|---------------------------|------|--------------------|----------|--------|------------------|----------|--------|
| | | Comp. | ONLY | | Qty. | ONLY | |
| MYSTIQUE (4-3/8" x 44) | 24 | \$240.00 | \$216.00 | R41145 | 8 | \$76.00 | R41143 |
| ENCHANTMENT (4-3/8" x 60) | 22 | \$280.50 | \$252.45 | R31085 | 8 | \$86.80 | R31083 |
| BELICOSO #1 (5-1/4" x 52) | 24 | \$274.80 | \$247.32 | R20975 | 8 | \$86.44 | R20973 |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | 24 | \$270.00 | \$243.00 | R24215 | 8 | \$85.00 | R24213 |
| TORPEDO (6-1/2" x 55) | 24 | \$316.80 | \$285.12 | R22785 | 8 | \$99.04 | R22783 |
| SORCERER (7" x 49) | 24 | \$285.60 | \$257.04 | R22775 | 8 | \$89.68 | R22773 |
| SPELLBOUND* (7-1/2" x 54) | 24 | \$355.20 | \$319.68 | R29355 | 8 | \$110.56 | R29353 |

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C. ASHTON

SMOOTH

| Shape/size | Qty. | Dominican Republic | | Item # | Connecticut Wrapper | | Item # |
|------------------------------|------|--------------------|----------|--------|---------------------|----------|--------|
| | | Comp. | ONLY | | Qty. | ONLY | |
| MAGNUM (5" x 50) | 25 | \$217.50 | \$195.75 | N97355 | 10 | \$83.30 | R04365 |
| CORONA* (5-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$215.00 | \$193.50 | N97255 | 10 | \$82.40 | R04335 |
| DOUBLE MAGNUM (6" x 50) | 25 | \$285.00 | \$256.50 | R16915 | 10 | \$107.60 | R16916 |
| 8-9-8 (6-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$233.75 | \$210.38 | N97055 | 10 | \$89.15 | R04375 |
| PRIME MINISTER (6-7/8" x 48) | 25 | \$257.50 | \$231.75 | N97555 | 10 | \$97.70 | R04355 |
| CHURCHILL* (7-1/2" x 52) | 25 | \$268.75 | \$241.88 | N97155 | 10 | \$101.75 | R04325 |

ASHTON MADURO –

The initial sweet taste comes from the wrapper, but once lit, the cigar becomes rich and nutty much like a great Tawny Port.

D. ASHTON MADURO

MEDIUM

| Shape/size | Qty. | Dominican Republic | | Item # | Maduro Wrapper | | Item # |
|-------------------|------|--------------------|----------|--------|----------------|----------|--------|
| | | Comp. | ONLY | | Qty. | ONLY | |
| #10 (5" x 50) | 25 | \$241.25 | \$217.13 | R10998 | 10 | \$91.85 | R10999 |
| #20 (5-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$228.75 | \$205.88 | R10988 | 10 | \$87.35 | R10987 |
| #40 (6" x 50) | 25 | \$255.00 | \$229.50 | R10968 | 10 | \$96.80 | R10967 |
| #50* (7" x 48) | 25 | \$268.75 | \$241.88 | R10958 | 10 | \$101.75 | R10957 |
| #60 (7-1/2" x 52) | 25 | \$300.00 | \$270.00 | R10948 | 10 | \$113.00 | R10947 |

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La Flor Dominicana



La Flor Dominicana Chapter One Limited Edition is an amazing example of craftsmanship and quality. The first ever box pressed chisel cigar made by La Flor Dominicana is made with a flawless Brazilian Maduro wrapper and is filled with a Connecticut Broadleaf binder along with Dominican super premium fillers. This medium to full bodied smoke is a true small batch. Get them while you can.

LA FLOR DOMINICANA CHAPTER ONE

Box of 10 Chisel (6-1/2" x 58)

MEDIUM / FULL Dominican Republic Oscuro Wrapper

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La Flor Dominicana The Capitulo II is chock full of robust Dominican Ligero long fillers, bound with Brazilian Habano leaf, flawlessly sheathed in an exquisite Nicaraguan Colorado wrapper, and topped with an immaculate chisel cap. *Another Limited Edition smoke, once it's gone, you're done.*

LA FLOR DOMINICANA CAPITULO II

Box of 10 Chisel (6-1/2" x 58)

FULL Dominican Republic Colorado Wrapper

Compare at \$116 **ONLY \$104.40** J42295



LA FLOR DOMINICANA DOUBLE LIGERO

This zesty Dominican has a nice easy draw, a slow even burn, and a peppery taste that earned it a 94 rating in *Cigar Aficionado* and the adoration of connoisseurs around the world.

| FULL | | Dominican Republic | | Choice of Wrapper / Item # | | | | |
|-------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------|------|----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Nat. | Mad. | Qty. | ONLY | Mad. |
| 600 (5-1/4" x 52) | 20 | \$162 | \$145.80 | R48575 | — | — | — | — |
| CHISEL* (6" x 54) | 20 | \$194 | \$174.60 | R48595 | — | 10 | \$92.30 | R48598 |
| 700 (6-1/2" x 60) | 20 | \$194 | \$174.60 | R48585 | R48588 | 5 | \$46.15 | R84478 |



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| Maduro | 4" x 60 |
| Connecticut | 4" x 60 |
| Connecticut | 3" x 58 |

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A. H. UPMANN by A.J. FERNANDEZ

| MEDIUM / FULL | Dominican Republic | Sumatra Wrapper | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO* (5" x 52) | 20 | \$153.80 | \$138.40 | J78015 |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 20 | \$159.00 | \$143.20 | J78025 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 54) | 20 | \$164.40 | \$147.80 | J78005 |

B. H. UPMANN CEDAR AGED CAMEROON

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | Dominican Rep. | Cameroon Wrapper | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| PETITE CORONA (5" x 44) | 20 | \$121 | \$89.95 | R43825 |
| CORONA (5-1/2" x 44) | 20 | \$129 | \$99.95 | R43815 |
| LONSDALE (5-5/8" x 44) | 20 | \$140 | \$99.95 | R43805 |
| CHURCHILL (5-5/8" x 46) | 20 | \$137 | \$109.95 | R43795 |

C. H. UPMANN CLUB SELECTION

| MEDIUM | Nicaragua | Connecticut Wrapper | | |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 54) | 16 | \$98.08 | \$88.32 | J54745 |
| TORO (6" x 50) | 16 | \$90.72 | \$81.60 | J54755 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 54) | 16 | \$98.08 | \$88.32 | J54765 |

D. H. UPMANN THE BANKER

| MEDIUM / FULL | Dominican Republic | Habano Wrapper | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| CURRENCY* (5-1/2" x 48) | 15 | \$120.60 | \$108.60 | J41445 |
| ANNUITY (6" x 52) | 15 | \$133.20 | \$120.00 | J41425 |
| | 5 | | \$42.50 | J41423 |

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A. MACANUDO CAFÉ

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|-----------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| MINIATURES (3-3/4" x 24) | 80 | \$114.90 | \$84.00 | N35455 |
| LORDS (4-3/4" x 49) | 25 | \$157.25 | \$119.00 | R34265 |
| | 10 | | \$52.60 | R34266 |
| PETITE CORONA (5" x 38) | 25 | \$149.75 | \$113.38 | N09120 |
| DUKE OF YORK (5-1/4" x 54) | 25 | \$207.25 | \$158.06 | R42555 |
| | 10 | | \$68.23 | R42556 |
| HAMPTON COURT (5-1/2" x 42) | 25 | \$184.75 | \$140.25 | N09110 |
| DUKE OF DEVON (5-1/2" x 42) | 25 | \$182.25 | \$138.38 | N09155 |
| HYDE PARK (5-1/2" x 49) | 25 | \$194.75 | \$148.06 | N09115 |
| CLAYBOURNE (6" x 33) | 25 | \$144.75 | \$109.31 | N09555 |
| DUKE OF WINDSOR (6" x 50) | 25 | \$219.75 | \$166.81 | N35255 |
| BARON DE (6-1/2" x 42) | 25 | \$192.25 | \$146.19 | N09455 |
| ROTHSCHILD | | | | |
| PORTOFINO TUBO (7" x 34) | 25 | \$194.75 | \$148.06 | N09655 |
| PRINCE PHILIP (7-1/2" x 49) | 25 | \$219.75 | \$167.13 | N33955 |

B. MACANUDO GOLD LABEL

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|-----------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| ASCOT (tins) (4-1/4" x 32) | 100 | \$194.90 | \$143.75 | R79035 |
| COURT (tins) (4-1/4" x 36) | 25 | \$96.45 | \$73.44 | R79045 |
| DUKE OF YORK (5-1/4" x 54) | 25 | \$219.75 | \$167.13 | R39485 |
| | 10 | | \$71.85 | R39466 |
| HAMPTON COURT (5-1/2" x 42) | 25 | \$224.75 | \$171.19 | R69225 |
| | 10 | | \$73.48 | R69226 |
| TUDOR (6" x 52) | 25 | \$232.25 | \$176.81 | R39475 |
| | 10 | | \$75.73 | R39476 |
| SHAKESPEARE (6-1/2" x 45) | 25 | \$212.25 | \$161.19 | R39485 |
| | 10 | | \$69.48 | R39486 |
| LORD NELSON (7" x 49) | 25 | \$237.25 | \$180.56 | R39495 |
| | 10 | | \$77.23 | R39496 |

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C. MACANUDO INSPIRADO BLACK

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|-----------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| ROBUSTO (4-7/8" x 48) | 20 | \$139.80 | \$111.84 | J79078 |
| TORO (5-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$149.80 | \$119.84 | J79088 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | 20 | \$159.80 | \$127.84 | J79068 |

D. MACANUDO CRU ROYALE

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|--------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$149.80 | \$119.84 | R97495 |
| | 10 | | \$64.92 | R97496 |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 20 | \$159.80 | \$127.84 | R97505 |
| GIGANTE* (6" x 60) | 20 | \$159.80 | \$127.84 | R97525 |
| | 10 | | \$68.92 | R97526 |

E. MACANUDO ESPECIALÉ

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|-------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 20 | \$150.00 | \$114.95 | J10535 |
| | 5 | | \$29.95 | J10533 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | 20 | \$169.00 | \$119.95 | J10545 |
| | 5 | | \$32.95 | J10543 |
| TORPEDO (6-1/4" x 54) | 20 | \$194.00 | \$123.95 | J10555 |
| CHURCHILL (7-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$173.00 | \$129.95 | J10525 |

F. MACANUDO MADURO

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|------------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| DIPLOMAT (4-1/2" x 60) | 25 | \$184.75 | \$140.25 | R16968 |
| | 10 | | \$61.10 | R16969 |
| HAMPTON CT (5-1/2" x 42) | 25 | \$184.75 | \$144.31 | R34218 |
| (tubos) | 10 | | \$62.73 | R34219 |
| HYDE PARK (5-1/2" x 49) | 25 | \$194.75 | \$148.06 | N37088 |
| | 10 | | \$64.23 | N76788 |
| GIGANTE (6" x 60) | 25 | \$219.75 | \$166.81 | J13128 |
| BARON DE ROTH. (6-1/2" x 42) | 25 | \$192.25 | \$146.19 | N09488 |
| | 10 | | \$63.48 | N76988 |
| PRINCE PHILIP (7-1/2" x 49) | 10 | \$87.90 | \$66.85 | N09888 |

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A. AVO SYNCRO NICARAGUA

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Ecuadorian Wrapper | |
|----------------------|------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$198 | \$178.20 | J52165 | |
| TORO* (6" x 54) | 20 | \$218 | \$196.20 | J52185 | |
| SUPER TORO (6" x 60) | 20 | \$238 | \$214.20 | J52175 | |

B. AVO CLASSIC

| SMOOTH | | Dominican Republic | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$190 | \$171.00 | J46025 | |
| ROBUSTO TUBO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$200 | \$180.00 | J46035 | |
| NO. 2 (6" x 50) | 20 | \$210 | \$189.00 | J46055 | |
| NO. 2 TUBO (6" x 50) | 20 | \$220 | \$198.00 | J46065 | |
| NO. 3 (7-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$220 | \$198.00 | J46085 | |
| NO. 5* (6-7/8" x 46) | 20 | \$200 | \$180.00 | J46045 | |
| NO. 9 (4-3/4" x 48) | 20 | \$180 | \$162.00 | J46015 | |
| PIRAMIDES (7" x 54) | 20 | \$220 | \$198.00 | J46075 | |

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A. DAVIDOFF 702 SERIES

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Habano Wrapper | |
|-------------------------------|------|-----------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | | ONLY | Item # | |
| SPECIAL R (4-7/8" x 50) | 25 | | \$508.25 | J76435 | |
| SIGNATURE 2000 (5-1/16" x 43) | 25 | | \$375.25 | J76425 | |
| NO. 3 (6" x 50) | 10 | | \$255.55 | J76415 | |
| SPECIAL T (6" x 52) | 20 | | \$478.80 | J76445 | |

B. DAVIDOFF NICARAGUA

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Dominican Republic | | Various Wrappers | |
|----------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | | ONLY | Item # | |
| Habano Wrapper | | | | | |
| PRIMEROS (4-1/8" x 34) | 6 | | \$26.10 | J42125 | |
| ROBUSTO TUBO (5" x 50) | 12 | | \$181.26 | J31135 | |
| | 4 | | \$60.42 | J31136 | |
| TORO* (5-1/2" x 54) | 12 | | \$214.32 | J31145 | |
| | 4 | | \$71.44 | J31146 | |
| TORO Box Pressed (6" x 52) | 12 | | \$207.48 | J54875 | |
| | 4 | | \$69.16 | J54876 | |
| DIADEMA (6-1/2" x 50) | 12 | | \$230.28 | J43485 | |
| | 4 | | \$76.76 | J43486 | |
| Maduro Wrapper | | | | | |
| PRIMEROS (4-1/8" x 34) | 6 | | \$26.10 | J42128 | |

C. DAVIDOFF ANIVERSARIO SERIES

| SMOOTH | | Dominican Republic | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|------------------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | | ONLY | Item # | |
| R (4-7/8" x 50) | 25 | | \$465.50 | R75545 | |
| | 4 | | \$74.48 | R75547 | |
| SHORT PERFECTO (4-7/8" x 52) | 25 | | \$406.13 | R75575 | |
| | 4 | | \$64.98 | R75577 | |
| T (Torpedo) (6" x 52) | 20 | | \$435.10 | R75585 | |
| | 4 | | \$87.02 | R75587 | |
| DOUBLE R* (7-1/2" x 50) | 25 | | \$779.00 | R75525 | |
| | 4 | | \$124.64 | R75527 | |

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A. PUNCH

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|----------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | EMS | Mad. | |
| MINIATURES (3" x 22) | 200 | \$102.90 | \$75.00 | J31665 | — | |
| SLIM PANETELAS (4" x 28) | 100 | \$164.90 | \$125.00 | N05755 | — | |
| ROTHSCHILD (4-1/2" x 50) | 50 | \$249.50 | \$188.63 | N05655 | N05688 | |
| | 10 | | \$42.73 | N05657 | N05689 | |
| LONDON CLUB* (5" x 40) | 25 | \$77.25 | \$57.75 | N94744 | N94788 | |
| PITA (6-1/8" x 50) | 25 | \$157.25 | \$119.00 | R02955 | R02958 | |
| | 10 | | \$52.60 | R02956 | — | |
| DBL. CORONA (6-3/4" x 48) | 25 | \$167.25 | \$126.50 | N05555 | N05588 | |
| | 10 | | \$55.60 | N05556 | — | |
| AFTER DINNER (7-1/4" x 45) | 25 | \$142.25 | \$107.75 | R43945 | R43948 | |
| | 10 | | \$48.10 | R43946 | — | |

B. PUNCH RARE COROJO

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | | Corojo Wrapper | |
|---------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROTHSCHILD (4-1/2" x 50) | 50 | \$284.50 | \$214.25 | N05659 | |
| | 10 | | \$47.85 | N05666 | |
| CHAMPION (4-1/2" x 60) | 25 | \$158.25 | \$115.25 | R83465 | |
| | 10 | | \$51.10 | R83466 | |
| ELITE (5-1/4" x 45) | 25 | \$109.75 | \$82.44 | R94715 | |
| | 10 | | \$37.98 | R94716 | |
| EN CRYSTALE (5-1/4" x 45) | 20 | \$169.80 | \$129.45 | J47695 | |
| MAGNUM* (5-1/4" x 54) | 25 | \$177.25 | \$134.63 | R42505 | |
| | 10 | | \$58.85 | R42506 | |
| PITA (6-1/8" x 50) | 25 | \$167.25 | \$126.81 | R35025 | |
| | 10 | | \$55.73 | R35026 | |
| DBL. CORONA (6-3/4" x 48) | 25 | \$174.75 | \$132.75 | R35015 | |
| | 10 | | \$58.10 | R35016 | |

C. PUNCH GRAN PURO NICARAGUA

| FULL | | Nicaragua | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROTHSCHILD (4-7/8" x 48) | 20 | \$105.80 | \$84.64 | J75745 | |
| ROBUSTO* (5-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$127.80 | \$102.24 | J75755 | |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 20 | \$129.80 | \$103.84 | J75765 | |
| CHURCHILL* (7-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$139.80 | \$111.84 | J75775 | |

D. PUNCH GRAN PURO

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | | Natural Wrapper | |
|---|------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| SANTA RITA* (4-1/2" x 52) (Rothschild) | 25 | \$142.25 | \$107.44 | R44055 | |
| RANCHO (5-1/2" x 54) (Robusto) | 25 | \$169.75 | \$128.38 | R44035 | |
| | 10 | | \$56.35 | R44036 | |
| PICO BONITO (6" x 50) (Toro) | 25 | \$167.25 | \$126.50 | R44025 | |
| SIERRA (6-1/2" x 48) (Lonsdale) | 25 | \$167.25 | \$126.81 | R44045 | |
| | 10 | | \$55.73 | R44046 | |

E. PUNCH SIGNATURE BLEND

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | | Corojo Wrapper | |
|--------------------------|------|----------|----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROTHSCHILD (4-1/2" x 50) | 18 | \$106.02 | \$64.98 | J45895 | |
| ROBUSTO* (5" x 54) | 18 | \$131.22 | \$80.73 | J45875 | |
| TORPEDO (5-3/4" x 52) | 18 | \$133.02 | \$81.63 | J45905 | |
| PITA (6" x 50) | 18 | \$129.42 | \$79.16 | J58695 | |
| GIGANTE (6" x 60) | 18 | \$142.02 | \$87.48 | J45885 | |

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GURKHA

A. GURKHA VENOM (Bundle)

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Dom. Wrapper | |
|-------------------|------|--------------------|----------------|--------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 15 | \$135 | \$44.95 | J47915 | |
| GORDO (6" x 60) | 15 | \$150 | \$49.95 | J47925 | |

B. GURKHA BLACK LEGION (Box)

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Rep. | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|-------------------|------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Conn. | Mad. |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 10 | \$100 | \$39.95 | J56565 | J56566 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | 10 | \$105 | \$44.95 | J56575 | J56576 |
| GORDO (6" x 60) | 10 | \$110 | \$49.95 | J56585 | J56586 |

C. GURKHA MASTERCLASS (Box)

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Conn. Wrapper | |
|-------------------|------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 16 | \$124.95 | \$59.95 | J49145 | |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 16 | \$134.95 | \$69.95 | J49165 | |

D. GURKHA RAPTOR (Bundle)

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|-------------------|------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Conn. | Mad. |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$160 | \$39.95 | J55575 | J55576 |
| TORO (6" x 50) | 20 | \$170 | \$44.95 | J55585 | J55586 |

E. GURKHA DRAGONLORD (Box)

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|---------------------|------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 16 | \$124.95 | \$59.95 | J49118 | |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 16 | \$145.95 | \$64.95 | J49138 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 16 | \$144.95 | \$69.95 | J49128 | |



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| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | |
|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| Bundle of 40 | | Sumatra | Maduro |
| TORPEDO (6-1/2" x 52) | R84027 | | R84028 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | R84037 | | R84048 |

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| MEDIUM | Nicaragua | Shape/size | Qty. | ONLY | Choice of Wrapper |
|--------------|---------------|------------|----------|--------|-------------------|
| | | | | | Natural Maduro |
| HERMOSO | (4" x 56) | 26 | \$325.00 | J55505 | J55508 |
| PRINCIPE | (4-1/2" x 46) | 25 | \$242.50 | R08455 | R08488 |
| | | 5 | \$48.50 | R08456 | R08589 |
| EXCLUSIVO* | (5-1/2" x 50) | 25 | \$300.00 | R07825 | R10768 |
| | | 5 | \$60.00 | R07826 | R10869 |
| CORONA | (6" x 42) | 25 | \$262.50 | R19897 | R19898 |
| | | 5 | \$52.50 | R19893 | R19899 |
| TORPEDO | (6" x 52) | 20 | \$334.00 | R19695 | R19698 |
| | | 5 | \$83.50 | — | R19699 |
| IMPERIAL | (6" x 54) | 25 | \$392.50 | R14775 | R14768 |
| | | 5 | \$78.50 | R14776 | R14769 |
| SUPERIOR | (5-1/4" x 42) | 25 | \$275.00 | R30055 | R30088 |
| MONARCA | (5-1/2" x 46) | 25 | \$297.50 | R07845 | R07848 |
| | | 5 | \$59.50 | — | R07849 |
| #4 | (6-1/2" x 60) | 20 | \$414.00 | J20155 | J20158 |
| PYRAMIDE | (6-7/8" x 52) | 25 | \$380.00 | R14755 | R09575 |
| DIPLOMATICO* | (7" x 50) | 25 | \$352.50 | R14765 | R07838 |
| | | 5 | \$70.50 | R14763 | R07839 |

B. PADRÓN

| MEDIUM | Nicaragua | Shape/size | Qty. | ONLY | Choice of Wrapper |
|------------|---------------|------------|----------|--------|-------------------|
| | | | | | Natural Maduro |
| DELICIAS | (4-7/8" x 46) | 26 | \$143.00 | R64345 | R64348 |
| | | 10 | \$55.00 | N82956 | R06639 |
| LONDRES | (5-1/2" x 42) | 26 | \$122.20 | R64365 | R64368 |
| | | 10 | \$47.00 | N82856 | N82889 |
| #2000 | (5" x 50) | 26 | \$150.80 | R64275 | R64278 |
| | | 10 | \$58.00 | N82556 | N82589 |
| #3000 | (5-1/2" x 52) | 26 | \$171.60 | R64285 | R64288 |
| | | 10 | \$66.00 | N82356 | N82389 |
| #4000 | (6-1/2" x 54) | 26 | \$202.80 | R64295 | R64298 |
| | | 10 | \$78.00 | R82356 | R62499 |
| #5000 | (5-1/2" x 56) | 26 | \$200.20 | R64305 | R64308 |
| | | 10 | \$77.00 | R35366 | R35369 |
| #7000* | (6-1/2" x 60) | 26 | \$218.40 | R40485 | R40488 |
| | | 10 | \$84.00 | N40486 | N40489 |
| PALMAS | (6-1/2" x 42) | 26 | \$140.40 | R64385 | R64388 |
| | | 10 | \$54.00 | N83356 | N83359 |
| AMBASSADOR | (6-7/8" x 42) | 26 | \$145.60 | R64325 | R64328 |
| EXECUTIVE | (7-1/2" x 50) | 26 | \$205.40 | R64355 | R64358 |
| | | 10 | \$79.00 | N82456 | N82489 |

C. SERIE 1926

Padrón 1926 Serie cigar line consists of sungrown Natural or Maduro wrappers. All tobacco used in this line is aged for five full years. The refined tobacco is then blended to create an exceptionally smooth, complex, balanced and full-bodied flavor. Continuing the Padrón tradition, the 1926 Serie cigars are offered in a box-pressed format featuring an individually numbered guarantee label.

| MEDIUM / FULL | Nicaragua | Shape/size | Qty. | ONLY | Choice of Wrapper |
|---------------|---------------|------------|----------|--------|-------------------|
| | | | | | Natural Maduro |
| NO. 1 | (6-3/4" x 54) | 24 | \$520.80 | R40295 | R40298 |
| | | 10 | \$217.00 | R85965 | R85968 |
| NO. 2* | (5-1/2" x 52) | 24 | \$424.80 | R60255 | R60288 |
| | | 10 | \$177.00 | R85975 | R85978 |
| NO. 6 | (4-3/4" x 50) | 24 | \$328.80 | R50255 | R50258 |
| | | 10 | \$137.00 | R85985 | R85988 |
| 40TH | (6-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$536.00 | R82205 | R82208 |
| | | 5 | \$134.00 | R82207 | R82200 |
| 80TH | (6-3/4" x 52) | 8 | \$254.40 | R81645 | R81648 |

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Introduced in 2009, La Traviata starts with a core of diverse, twin Ligero longfiller tobaccos (one from Pueblo Nuevo in Nicaragua, the other from The DR), and a Cameroon binder rolled in a dark, shimmering Ecuadorian Habano wrapper. These marvelously smooth cigars hit on all cylinders, offering a complex smoke with earthy tobacco flavors, dark woody notes, and an appealingly sweet finish.

A. C.A.O. LA TRAVIATA

| Shape/size | Wrapper | Qty. | Nicaragua | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|---------------------|---------|------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| | | | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| DIVINO (5" x 50) | Natural | 24 | \$129.36 | \$87.12 | J83305 | |
| | Maduro | 24 | \$138.96 | \$93.84 | J83308 | |
| RADIANTE (6" x 52) | Natural | 24 | \$141.36 | \$95.52 | J83325 | |
| | Maduro | 24 | \$148.56 | \$100.56 | J83328 | |
| INTREPIDO (7" x 54) | Natural | 24 | \$153.36 | \$104.26 | J83315 | |
| | Maduro | 24 | \$164.16 | \$110.98 | J83318 | |

B. C.A.O. CONSIGLIERE

| Shape/size | Wrapper | Qty. | Nicaragua | | Brazilian Wrapper | |
|---------------------|-----------|------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| | | | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| ASSOCIATE (5" x 52) | | 20 | \$143.80 | \$97.52 | J59645 | |
| | | 10 | | \$53.76 | J59646 | |
| SOLDIER (6" x 54) | | 20 | \$163.80 | \$111.52 | J59635 | |
| | | 10 | | \$60.76 | J59636 | |
| BOSS (7" x 56) | | 20 | \$183.80 | \$125.52 | J59625 | |
| | (Torpedo) | 10 | | \$67.76 | J59626 | |

C. C.A.O. BRAZILIA

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | Honduras | | Brazilian Wrapper | |
|-------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| | | | ONLY | Item # | ONLY | Item # |
| GOL (5" x 56) | 20 | \$123.80 | \$83.80 | R35435 | 10 \$46.90 | R35436 |
| BOX PRESS (5-1/2" x 55) | 20 | \$145.80 | \$99.76 | R72335 | 10 \$54.88 | R72336 |
| LAMBADA (6" x 50) | 20 | \$135.80 | \$92.48 | R54465 | 10 \$51.24 | R54466 |
| AMAZON (6" x 60) | 20 | \$165.80 | \$113.48 | R35455 | 10 \$61.74 | R35456 |
| SAMBA* (6-1/4" x 54) | 20 | \$145.80 | \$99.48 | R35445 | 10 \$54.74 | R35446 |

D. C.A.O. FLATHEAD (All sizes are box-pressed)

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | Nicaragua | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|-------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|------------------|--------|
| | | | ONLY | Item # | ONLY | Item # |
| SPARKPLUG (4-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$143.80 | \$98.08 | J40718 | 5 \$27.02 | J40713 |
| CAMSHAFT (5-1/2" x 54) | 24 | \$189.36 | \$129.79 | J40688 | 5 \$29.54 | J40683 |
| CARB* (6" x 60) | 24 | \$213.36 | \$146.59 | J40698 | 5 \$33.04 | J40693 |
| PISTON (6-1/2" x 42) | 30 | \$221.70 | \$151.74 | J40708 | 5 \$27.79 | J40703 |
| BIG BLOCK (7" x 70) | 24 | \$249.36 | \$171.46 | J40678 | 5 \$38.22 | J40673 |

E. C.A.O. GOLD

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | Nicaragua | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|---------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| | | | ONLY | Item # | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$127.80 | \$86.88 | R23285 | 10 \$48.44 | R23286 |
| CORONA* (5-1/2" x 42) | 20 | \$119.80 | \$81.28 | R23275 | 10 \$45.64 | R23276 |
| TORPEDO (6-1/4" x 52) | 20 | \$147.80 | \$100.60 | R23305 | — | — |
| COR. GORDA (6-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$137.80 | \$93.88 | R23295 | 10 \$51.90 | R23296 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | 20 | \$147.80 | \$100.88 | R37755 | 10 \$55.44 | R37756 |
| DBL. CORONA (7-1/2" x 54) | 20 | \$159.80 | \$109.28 | R37765 | 10 \$59.64 | R37786 |

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A. SERIE V MELANIO

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Shape/size | | Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY Item # |
| PET. CORONA | (4-1/2" x 46) | Sum. | 10 | \$86.10 | \$73.19 J20825 |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 52) | Sum. | 10 | \$102.24 | \$86.90 J20835 |
| TORPEDO | (6-1/2" x 52) | Sum. | 10 | \$139.92 | \$118.93 J20845 |
| | | Mad. | 10 | \$139.92 | \$118.93 J20848 |
| FIGURADO* | (6-1/2" x 52) | Sum. | 10 | \$150.68 | \$128.08 J20815 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 50) | Sum. | 10 | \$129.92 | \$118.93 J20805 |
| | | Mad. | 10 | \$129.92 | \$118.93 J20808 |

B. SERIE V

| FULL | Nicaragua | Sungrown Wrapper | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| BELICOSO | (5" x 54) | 24 | \$200.66 | \$170.56 | R74675 |
| | | 5 | | \$38.03 | R74676 |
| DBL ROBUSTO | (5" x 54) | 24 | \$200.66 | \$170.56 | R74695 |
| | | 5 | | \$38.03 | R74696 |
| TORPEDO* | (6" x 56) | 24 | \$240.82 | \$204.70 | R74735 |
| | | 5 | | \$45.15 | R74736 |
| DOUBLE TORO | (6" x 60) | 24 | \$248.80 | \$211.48 | R74705 |
| | | 5 | | \$46.56 | R74706 |
| FIGURADO | (6" x 60) | 24 | \$281.04 | \$238.88 | R74715 |
| | | 5 | | \$52.27 | R74716 |
| LANCERO | (7" x 38) | 36 | \$276.74 | \$235.23 | R74725 |
| | | 5 | | \$35.17 | R74726 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 52) | 24 | \$256.96 | \$218.42 | R74685 |
| | | 5 | | \$48.00 | R74686 |

C. SERIE O

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|-------------------------|------|-----------|------|-------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | Sun. | | 20 | \$131.40 | \$111.69 | R62925 |
| | Mad. | | 20 | \$157.98 | \$134.28 | R62928 |
| PERFECTO (5" x 55) | Sun. | | 20 | \$166.26 | \$141.32 | R62975 |
| TORPEDO (6-1/2" x 52) | Sun. | | 20 | \$152.90 | \$129.97 | R62935 |
| | Mad. | | 20 | \$177.08 | \$150.52 | R62938 |
| CHURCHILL* (7" x 50) | Sun. | | 20 | \$152.90 | \$129.97 | R62955 |
| | Mad. | | 20 | \$169.44 | \$144.02 | R62958 |
| (also available in 10s) | | | | | | |

(also available in 10s)

D. CONNECTICUT RESERVE

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Nicaragua | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|-------------------------|------|-----------|---------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| PETITE CORONA (4" x 38) | 30 | \$155.16 | \$131.89 | R83775 |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$137.08 | \$116.52 | R84145 |
| | 10 | | \$63.26 | R84146 |
| TORO (6" x 50) | 20 | \$163.18 | \$138.70 | R84155 |
| | 10 | | \$74.35 | R84156 |
| LONSDALE (6-1/2" x 44) | 20 | \$131.78 | \$112.01 | R84135 |
| | 10 | | \$61.01 | R84136 |
| TORPEDO (6-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$189.40 | \$160.99 | R84165 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 20 | \$189.40 | \$160.99 | R84125 |
| | 10 | | \$85.50 | R84126 |

E. SERIE G

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|---------------------------|------|-----------|----------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Wrp. | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (4-1/2" x 50) | Cam. | 25 | \$146.12 | \$124.20 | R62985 |
| | Cam. | 10 | | \$54.68 | R99386 |
| | Mad. | 24 | \$143.72 | \$122.16 | R62988 |
| BELICOSO (5" x 52) | Cam. | 25 | \$149.60 | \$127.16 | R62995 |
| | Cam. | 10 | | \$55.86 | R99396 |
| | Mad. | 24 | \$153.22 | \$130.24 | R62998 |
| TORPEDO* (6-1/2" x 52) | Cam. | 25 | \$153.00 | \$130.05 | R63005 |
| | Cam. | 10 | | \$57.02 | R99406 |
| | Mad. | 24 | \$162.96 | \$138.52 | R63008 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | Cam. | 25 | \$153.22 | \$130.24 | R63015 |
| | Cam. | 10 | | \$57.10 | R99316 |
| | Mad. | 24 | \$156.30 | \$132.86 | R63018 |

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MEDIUM

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(5" x 52) **ONLY \$9.96** H19805



SMOOTH / MEDIUM

Ashton Estate Sun Grown #22
(6" x 52) **ONLY \$20.00** H86005



#10 CIGAR 2016 MEDIUM

Punch Gran Pure Santa Rita Rothschild Nat.
(4-1/2" x 52) **ONLY \$5.69** H44055



#8 CIGAR 2015 MEDIUM / FULL

Ashton Symmetry Robusto Habano
(5" x 50) **ONLY \$12.25** H43795



MEDIUM

Crowned Heads Four Kicks Robusto Habano
(5" x 50) **ONLY \$7.60** H36141



#2 CIGAR 2014 MEDIUM / FULL

E.P. Carrillo La Historia E-111 Maduro
(6-7/8" x 54) **ONLY \$10.50** H43058



#1 CIGAR 2012 MEDIUM

Flor de Las Antillas Toro Sungrown
(6" x 52) **ONLY \$7.00** H00167



MEDIUM / FULL

Davidoff Nicaragua Toro Habano
(5-1/2" x 54) **ONLY \$18.80** H00326



SMOOTH / MEDIUM

H. Upmann Vintage Cameroon Belicoso
(6-1/8" x 52) **ONLY \$7.00** H01539



SMOOTH / MEDIUM

Hammer & Sickle Tradicion Churchill Conn.
(7" x 48) **ONLY \$9.05** H91815



MEDIUM / FULL

La Aroma de Cuba Robusto Maduro
(5" x 54) **ONLY \$5.75** H01709



#3 CIGAR 2017 FULL

Oliva Serie V Belicoso Sungrown
(5" x 54) **ONLY \$8.36** H00437



SMOOTH

Macanudo Hyde Park Robusto Connecticut
(5-1/2" x 49) **ONLY \$7.79** H01935



MEDIUM / FULL

Padron Anniversary Exclusivo Maduro
(5-1/2" x 50) **ONLY \$12.00** H00008



MEDIUM

Padron Anniversary Exclusivo Natural
(5-1/2" x 50) **ONLY \$12.00** H00005



#18 CIGAR 2014 MEDIUM

San Cristobal Revelation Toro Sungrown
(6-1/4" x 52) **ONLY \$8.50** H32225

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Palma Real Dominican long filler cigars demonstrate high quality by using choice, Cuban seed Dominican Olor tobacco for both filler and binder. Cigars made with wonderful Dominican Olor tobacco typically offer a top shelf cigar smoking experience, but when each cigar is expertly wrapped in a rich, lustrous Natural, Maduro, or Candela wrapper; the cigar experience gets kicked up a notch.

PALMA REAL 2 bundles of 25 (50 Cigars Total)

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|---------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Comp. | ONLY | Mad. | Nat. | Can. |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 50) | \$120 | \$64.95 | R07639 | R07636 | R99496 |
| LONSDALE | (6" x 44) | \$120 | \$64.95 | R07689 | R07686 | - |
| TORO | (6" x 50) | \$130 | \$64.95 | R33179 | - | R99486 |
| TORPEDO | (6-1/2" x 52) | \$140 | \$74.95 | R23779 | R23776 | R99506 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 46) | \$135 | \$74.95 | R07649 | R07646 | - |
| PRESIDENTE | (7-1/2" x 50) | \$140 | \$74.95 | R07609 | R07606 | R99476 |

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Per Cigar

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UP TO

LA GLORIA CUBANA

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|--------------------------------|------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Natural | Maduro |
| GLORIA PETITE (4-1/2" x 32) | 100 | \$167.90 | \$125.00 | R39605 | R39608 |
| WAVELL (5" x 50) | 25 | \$139.75 | \$105.25 | N11355 | N11388 |
| | 10 | | \$47.10 | N51260 | - |
| CORONA GORDA (6" x 52) | 25 | \$169.75 | \$128.06 | N83255 | N63288 |
| | 10 | | \$56.23 | N51258 | - |
| EXTRA (6-1/4" x 46) | 25 | \$154.75 | \$116.81 | N51358 | N51358 |
| | 10 | | \$51.73 | R02896 | - |
| TORPEDO #1* (6-1/2" x 56) | 25 | \$217.25 | \$164.94 | R15755 | - |
| | 10 | | \$70.98 | R15756 | - |
| EN CEDRO (6-3/4" x 48) | 14 | \$104.85 | \$79.42 | R26255 | - |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 25 | \$169.75 | \$128.38 | N11055 | N11088 |
| | 10 | | \$56.35 | N77455 | - |
| CHARLEMAGNE (7-1/4" x 54) | 25 | \$192.25 | \$145.56 | N10755 | R00108 |
| | 10 | | \$63.23 | N10756 | - |

La Gloria Cubana's special blend delivers a uniquely balanced and unmistakable flavor. Rich, flavorful and refined, a medium bodied smoke handmade in the Dominican Republic from succulent Dominican and Nicaraguan extra-aged long fillers.

26 1-800-237-2559

MON.-FRI.: 7AM-10PM; SAT.-SUN.: 8AM-7PM E.T.



RG SANTIAGO

Box of 50 - HANDMADE CHURCHILLS 7"x 50

RG Santiago is a handmade, smooth to medium-bodied smoke that uses a very select blend of premium Honduran and Nicaraguan combo filler tobaccos. Given the price for these high quality cigars, they just might be one of the best deals around.

50 Cigars
SAVE \$38.05
Per Box

235 BONUS CLUB (ELIGIBLE)

(7" x 50) Boxes of 50
SMOOTH / MEDIUM
Dominican Republic
Compare \$113
ONLY \$74.95

Choice of Wrapper:
Maduro J12078
Connecticut J12075

TRAVEL CASE FREE

with **CLONES** bundle purchase While Supplies Last

\$19.95
RETAIL VALUE

(Holds up to 5 Churchill cigars)

Plus

SAVE UP TO \$73

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PREMIUM CLONES



AS LOW AS \$1.50
Per Cigar

A. CLONES CBN-BHK Bundle of 10
Try this knock-off of the rare **COHIBA CUBAN BENIKE***! (*a registered trademark of Habanos S.A.)

| Shape/size | Dominican Republic | Habano Wrapper | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------|----------------|--------|
| GRAN TORO (6" x 54) | | | \$100 | \$29.95 | J78175 |

B. CLONES MCGD Bundle of 20
If **MACANUDD GOLD*** is a favorite, try this value-priced clone. (*a registered trademark of General Cigar)

| Shape/size | Dom. Republic | Connecticut Wrapper | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------|----------------|--------|
| SHORT CORONA (4" x 40) | | | \$95.95 | \$29.95 | J79915 |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | | | \$105.95 | \$32.95 | J79905 |
| CORONA (5-1/2" x 43) | | | \$99.95 | \$34.95 | J79895 |
| TORO GRANDE (6-1/2" x 56) | | | \$105.95 | \$39.95 | J79925 |

C. CLONES R18 Bundle of 20
Attention devotees of **ROMEO y JULIETA 1875***: you'll love this name brand knock off. (*a registered trademark of Altadis USA)

| Shape/size | Dominican Republic | Natural Wrapper | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------|----------------|--------|
| FIGURADO 5 (5" x 50) | | | \$105.95 | \$39.95 | J81485 |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | | | \$105.95 | \$34.95 | J81515 |
| CORONA LARGA (5-1/2" x 42) | | | \$89.95 | \$29.95 | J81475 |
| LONSDALE (6" x 46) | | | \$99.95 | \$29.95 | J81505 |
| TORO (6" x 50) | | | \$105.95 | \$37.95 | J81525 |
| FIGURADO 6 (6" x 50) | | | \$105.95 | \$39.95 | J81495 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | | | \$105.95 | \$39.95 | J81465 |

14 CIGAR SAMPLER FREE

with DREW ESTATE
box purchase

Plus

While Supplies Last

SAVE
UP TO **\$53**

\$129 RETAIL
VALUE

ACID BY DREW ESTATE

SMOOTH / MEDIUM

| Shape/size | Wrp. | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------------------------|-------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| BLONDIE (4" x 38) | Conn. | 40 | \$213.20 | \$166.30 | R17225 |
| | | 10 | | \$46.58 | R17226 |
| | Mad. | 40 | \$213.20 | \$166.30 | R17228 |
| | Can. | 40 | \$208.80 | \$162.86 | J79505 |
| | Sum. | 40 | \$208.80 | \$162.86 | J79515 |
| | Cam. | 40 | \$208.80 | \$162.86 | J79525 |
| NASTY (Pyramid) (4" x 52) | Mad. | 24 | \$178.80 | \$139.46 | R17188 |
| | | 10 | | \$63.11 | R17189 |
| WAFE (5" x 21) | Sum. | 28 | \$144.75 | \$112.91 | J53295 |
| EARTHINESS (5" x 42) | Sum. | 24 | \$178.80 | \$139.46 | J53275 |
| | | | | | |
| 1400cc (Tubo) (5" x 50) | Nat. | 18 | \$202.68 | \$158.09 | J08295 |
| | | 10 | | \$92.83 | J08296 |
| ATOM (5" x 50) | Mad. | 24 | \$230.88 | \$180.09 | J08288 |
| | | 10 | | \$80.04 | J08289 |
| LIQUID (5" x 50) | Conn. | 24 | \$230.88 | \$180.09 | R17175 |
| | | 10 | | \$80.04 | R17176 |
| BLONDIE (Belicoso) (5" x 54) | Conn. | 24 | \$178.80 | \$139.46 | R89698 |
| | | 10 | | \$63.11 | R89696 |
| ONE (Torpedo) (5" x 54) | Cam. | 24 | \$230.88 | \$180.09 | R72145 |
| | | 10 | | \$80.04 | R72146 |
| KUBA KUBA (5" x 54) | Sum. | 24 | \$230.88 | \$180.09 | R17215 |
| | | 10 | | \$80.04 | R17216 |
| | Mad. | 24 | \$224.40 | \$175.03 | R17218 |
| | | 10 | | \$77.93 | R17219 |
| | Can. | 24 | \$236.88 | \$184.77 | J79535 |
| | Sum. | 24 | \$241.44 | \$188.32 | J53285 |
| DEEP DISH (5" x 58) | | | | | |
| TOAST (6" x 50) | Mad. | 24 | \$230.88 | \$180.09 | J08308 |
| | | 10 | | \$80.04 | J08309 |
| COLD INFUSION (6-3/4" x 44) | Conn. | 24 | \$204.72 | \$159.68 | R72115 |

Boxes of 10

| Shape/size | Wrp. | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|--|-------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| KUBA DELUXE (6" x 50) | Sum. | 10 | \$119.50 | \$93.21 | J53225 |
| KINDRED SPIRIT (6" x 54 - Perfecto) | Conn. | 10 | \$123.95 | \$77.95 | R65175 |
| ACID SUBCULTURE (5" x 54) | Mad. | 10 | \$123.95 | \$77.95 | R65178 |
| EXTRA ORDINARY LARRY (6" x 60) | Mad. | 10 | \$145.50 | \$113.49 | R72135 |
| KUBA GRANDE (6" x 60) | Sum. | 10 | \$126.00 | \$98.28 | J32345 |
| ROAM (7" x 48) | Nat. | 10 | \$126.00 | \$98.28 | R23085 |

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MON.-FRI.: 7AM-10PM; SAT.-SUN.: 8AM-7PM E.T.

6 CIGARS FREE

with purchase of these 3 brands
by MY FATHER While Supplies Last

\$72 RETAIL VALUE

Plus FREE SHIPPING

on your ENTIRE ORDER with MY FATHER box purchase



MY FATHER

A. MY FATHER THE JUDGE

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|--------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| GRAND ROBUSTO* (5" x 60) | 23 | \$285.20 | \$256.68 | J75685 |
| TORO FINO (6" x 52) | 23 | \$269.10 | \$242.19 | J78595 |
| TORO (6" x 56) | 23 | \$278.30 | \$250.47 | J75695 |

B. LE BIJOU 1922

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|------------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| PETITE ROBUSTO (4-1/2" x 50) | 23 | \$154.10 | \$138.69 | R88285 |
| GRAND ROBUSTO (5-5/8" x 55) | 23 | \$243.80 | \$219.42 | R88265 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | 23 | \$253.00 | \$227.70 | R88295 |
| TORPEDO* (6-1/8" x 52) | 23 | \$264.50 | \$238.05 | J07565 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 23 | \$273.70 | \$246.33 | R88275 |

C. MY FATHER

| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|--------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| #1 (5-1/4" x 52) | 23 | \$223.10 | \$200.79 | R97695 |
| | 5 | | \$46.15 | R97696 |
| #2 TORPEDO (5-1/2" x 54) | 23 | \$253.00 | \$227.70 | R97945 |
| | 5 | | \$52.00 | R97946 |
| #3 (6" x 49) | 23 | \$264.50 | \$238.05 | R98135 |
| | 5 | | \$54.25 | R98136 |
| #5 (6" x 56) | 23 | \$269.10 | \$242.19 | R98145 |
| | 5 | | \$55.15 | R98146 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 10 | \$120.00 | \$108.00 | J46915 |

DON RAFAEL FUMAS



DON RAFAEL FUMAS
(6" x 44) Bundle of 40

SMOOTH Dominican Republic
Compare at \$59.95
ONLY \$39.95

Here's an idea: take the same quality tobaccos used for premium Don Rafael cigars and bundle them up for terrific savings. The result is Don Rafael Fumas, smooth bodied stogies crafted with Dominican fillers and binders, then sheathed in silky Connecticut or rich Maduro wrapper leaves.

Bulk BUY
80 CIGARS CONNECTICUT J52740
FOR ONLY \$59.95 MADURO J52749
SWEET J52747

Choice of Wrapper: CONNECTICUT J52745 MADURO J52748 SWEET J52746



80 Cigars
ONLY 75¢
Per Cigar

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Pay online with **PayPal** **29**

PREMIUM OVERRUNS

ROCKY PATEL

SERIES E (Edge)

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|--------------------------|------|----------|---------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Conn. | Maduro |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | 16 | \$108 | \$59.95 | R86705 | — |
| TORPEDO (6" x 52) | 16 | \$108 | \$59.95 | R86615 | R86618 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | 16 | \$108 | \$59.95 | R86605 | R86608 |
| SIXTY (6" x 60) | 16 | \$123 | \$59.95 | R86595 | — |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | 16 | \$108 | \$59.95 | R86575 | — |
| DBL CORONA (7-1/2" x 52) | 16 | \$108 | \$59.95 | R86585 | — |

AS LOW AS
\$2
Per stick

SAVE
UP TO
\$80

SERIES D (Decade) - Not Shown

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | | Sumatra Wrapper | |
|------------------------|------|----------|---------|-----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 12 | \$123 | \$59.95 | R86555 | |
| EMPEROR (6" x 60) | 12 | \$123 | \$59.95 | R86515 | |
| LONSDALE (6-1/2" x 44) | 12 | \$123 | \$59.95 | R86545 | |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | 12 | \$123 | \$59.95 | R86565 | |

SAVE
UP TO
\$63

SERIES OW (Olde World) - Not Shown

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Corojo Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|------|----------|---------|----------------|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| TORPEDO (5" x 54) | 15 | \$138 | \$57.95 | R92745 | |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 54) | 15 | \$123 | \$57.95 | R92725 | |

GRAN HABANO

GRAN HABANO OVERRUNS

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|------------------------|------|----------|---------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Corojo | Habano |
| GRAN ROBUSTO (6" x 54) | 18 | \$102 | \$45.95 | R96095 | R96135 |
| IMPERIAL (6" x 60) | 15 | \$111 | \$47.95 | R96105 | R96145 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | 18 | \$105 | \$46.95 | R96085 | R96125 |

PDR

PDR FACTORY SECONDS

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|---------------------|------|--------------------|---------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Conn. | Maduro |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$120 | \$39.95 | J52395 | J52398 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 20 | \$125 | \$44.95 | J52385 | J52388 |

SAVE
\$80

GURKHA

Featured Blends:
• Grand Reserve Connecticut
• Legend Habano • Black Dragon Maduro

GURKHA FACTORY OVERRUNS

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Nicaragua | | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|---------------------|------|-----------|---------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Conn. | Habano | Maduro |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 16 | \$179 | \$39.95 | J53605 | J53625 | J53648 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 52) | 16 | \$181 | \$42.95 | J53615 | J53635 | J53658 |

SAVE
UP TO
\$139

VICTOR SINCLAIR CABINET '99



**SAVE
UP TO
\$66**

Victor Sinclair Cabinet '99 is handcrafted with an Ecuadorian Connecticut wrapper and ultra-premium, aged Dominican tobaccos and binder that have been cured for years under strict measures of quality, the Cabinet '99 is that rare and coveted blend of excellence and value.

A. VICTOR SINCLAIR CABINET '99

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | WAS | SALE | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$99 | \$44.95 | \$34.95 | J17145 |
| TORO (5-3/4" x 50) | 20 | \$103 | \$46.95 | \$36.95 | J13205 |
| GORDO (6" x 60) | 20 | \$110 | \$51.95 | \$41.95 | J40025 |
| TORPEDO (6-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$114 | \$47.95 | \$37.95 | J17155 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 20 | \$108 | \$49.95 | \$39.95 | J17135 |

B. VICTOR SINCLAIR CABINET '99 BOX PRESS

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | WAS | SALE | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$99 | \$44.95 | \$34.95 | J29415 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 20 | \$109 | \$49.95 | \$39.95 | J17138 |



SERIES 5/5 Premium Churchills (7" x 50) Box of 20

SMOOTH / MEDIUM Dominican Republic
COMPARE AT \$159 WAS ~~\$64.95~~

SALE \$54.95

Your Choice of Wrapper:

| Shape/size | Wrapper | Item # |
|------------|-------------|--------|
| WHITE | Connecticut | J17195 |
| YELLOW | Cameroon | J17205 |
| BLUE | Maduro | J17218 |
| RED | Corojo | J09595 |
| GREEN | Sungrown | J09605 |



**BONUS
CLUB
ELIGIBLE**



10 CIGARS FREE

\$133.40
RETAIL VALUE

with MONTECRISTO box
purchase While Supplies Last

MONTECRISTO®

A. MONTECRISTO

| SMOOTH Dominican Republic Natural Wrapper | | | | |
|---|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | 25 | \$325.25 | \$234.25 | N70755 |
| | 5 | | \$49.35 | N70756 |
| #3 (5-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$261.25 | \$188.00 | R03365 |
| #2 TORPEDO (6" x 50) | 25 | \$439.75 | \$316.75 | R06695 |
| | 5 | | \$65.85 | R06696 |
| DBL CORONA (6-1/4" x 50) | 25 | \$347.50 | \$250.00 | N70655 |
| | 5 | | \$52.50 | N70656 |
| #1 (6-5/8" x 44) | 25 | \$299.25 | \$215.50 | N70455 |
| | 5 | | \$45.60 | N70456 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 50) | 25 | \$365.75 | \$263.50 | R06705 |
| | 5 | | \$55.20 | R06706 |

B. MONTE by A.J. FERNANDEZ BOX OF 20

| MEDIUM / FULL Nicaragua Habano Wrapper | | | | |
|--|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (4-1/4" x 54) | 20 | \$224.60 | \$202.20 | J78995 |
| CORONA (5" x 44) | 20 | \$218.40 | \$196.60 | J78995 |
| TORO (6" x 55) | 20 | \$228.80 | \$206.00 | J78995 |
| BELICOSO (6-1/8" x 54) | 20 | \$234.00 | \$210.60 | J78995 |

C. MONTECRISTO WHITE

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM Dominican Republic Natural Wrapper | | | | |
|--|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROTHSCHILD (5" x 52) | 27 | \$300.78 | \$270.81 | R44805 |
| | 5 | | \$52.65 | R44807 |
| WHITE COURT* (5-1/2" x 44) | 15 | \$157.50 | \$141.75 | R44785 |
| | 5 | | \$49.75 | R44787 |
| BELICOSO #2 (6-1/8" x 52) | 27 | \$419.31 | \$377.46 | R44775 |
| | 10 | | \$144.80 | R44776 |
| | 5 | | \$72.40 | R44777 |
| ESPECIAL #1 (6-5/8" x 44) | 27 | \$280.53 | \$252.45 | R44795 |
| | 10 | | \$99.50 | R44796 |

D. MONTECRISTO CLASSIC BOX OF 20

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM Dominican Republic Connecticut Wrapper | | | | |
|--|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 20 | \$235.80 | \$212.20 | J52325 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | 20 | \$248.60 | \$223.80 | J52315 |
| #2 (6-1/8" x 52) | 20 | \$321.80 | \$289.60 | J52295 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 54) | 20 | \$273.40 | \$246.00 | J52305 |

E. MONTECRISTO WHITE VINTAGE BOX OF 20

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM Dominican Republic Connecticut Wrapper | | | | |
|--|------|---------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| #3 (5-1/2" x 44) | 20 | \$231 | \$208.00 | J51525 |
| #2 (6" x 50) | 20 | \$319 | \$287.20 | J51535 |
| DBL CORONA (6-1/4" x 50) | 20 | \$275 | \$247.60 | J51545 |

F. MONTECRISTO CLUB SELECTION

| MEDIUM / FULL Dominican Republic Habano Wrapper | | | | |
|---|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 52) | 20 | \$224.20 | \$154.95 | J58485 |
| BELICOSO (6" x 52) | 20 | \$244.20 | \$159.95 | J58495 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 54) | 20 | \$249.20 | \$164.95 | J58505 |

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MON.-FRI.: 7AM-10PM; SAT.-SUN.: 8AM-7PM E.T.

VICTOR SINCLAIR

POWERHOUSE 16 CHURCHILL 7" x 50 SAMPLER

MEDIUM (7" x 50) Dominican Republic
Sampler includes variety of wrappers:
4 55 Series Green (Sun Grown Wrapper)
4 Legacy (Maduro Wrapper)
4 55 Series Red (Corojo Wrapper)
4 Double Maduro (Maduro Wrapper)

One Bundle (16 total cigars)

Compare at \$115

ONLY \$39.95 #826885

2 Bundles (32 total cigars)

Compare at \$230

2-FER \$69.95 #826886



AS LOW AS
\$219
Per Cigar

One of our best selling long filler premium smokes



V.S.O.P. is a long filler smoke found only here at Thompson. Available in Natural or Maduro wrappers and packaged in money saving 25 count bundles. The V.S.O.P. line of tobaccos are largely Dominican long filler and binder with an Indonesian wrapper. Definitely a smooth to medium-bodied smoke that delivers as much as you would expect.

V.S.O.P.™ Bundles of 25

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Single Bundle | Natural | Maduro |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 50) | \$56.95 | R33515 | — |
| PANETELA | (5-1/2" x 38) | \$54.95 | R45495 | — |
| CORONA | (6" x 42) | \$57.95 | R33535 | — |
| BELICOSO | (6" x 46) | \$64.95 | R45485 | — |
| TORO | (6" x 50) | \$58.95 | R33505 | R33508 |
| LONSDALE | (6-1/2" x 44) | \$54.95 | R33565 | R33568 |
| TORPEDO | (6-1/2" x 52) | \$65.95 | R33525 | R33528 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 50) | \$64.95 | R33555 | R33558 |
| DBL. CORONA | (7-1/2" x 50) | \$57.95 | R33545 | — |
| | | Bundle of 20 | | |
| GORDO | (6" x 60) | \$54.95 | J35805 | J35808 |

250 BONUS CIGARS ELIGIBLE

**FREE
SHIPPING**

on your ENTIRE ORDER
with bundle purchase



SAVE UP TO \$99

2 Bundles
(50 Cigars)

ONLY \$106.95

Compare to \$132

3 Bundles
(75 Cigars)

ONLY \$141.95

Compare to \$198

4 Bundles
(100 Cigars)

ONLY \$164.95

Compare to \$264

Rocky Patel

**SAVE \$2740
UP TO**



JAVA by DREW ESTATE & ROCKY PATEL

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Nicaragua | | Choice of Wrapper | | | |
|-----------------------|------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------|------------|
| Shape/Size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Latte Conn. | Mint Maduro | Maduro | Red Maduro |
| CORONA (5" x 42) | 24 | \$199.20 | \$179.28 | J07315 | J07048 | J07318 | J79168 |
| | 5 | | \$39.85 | J07316 | J07049 | J07319 | — |
| THE 58 (5" x 50) | 24 | \$253.20 | \$227.88 | J07335 | J07078 | J07338 | J79188 |
| | 5 | | \$49.97 | J07336 | J07079 | J07339 | — |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | 24 | \$220.80 | \$198.72 | J07325 | J07068 | J07328 | J79178 |
| | 5 | | \$43.90 | J07326 | J07069 | J07329 | — |
| TORO (6" x 50) | 24 | \$234.00 | \$210.60 | J07345 | J07088 | J07348 | J79198 |
| | 5 | | \$46.37 | J07346 | J07089 | J07349 | — |

Cigar Aficionado
2016 TOP 25

A. SUN GROWN MADURO BOX OF 20

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/Size | | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | | \$184.00 | \$165.60 | J51798 | |
| TORPEDO (5-1/2" x 52) | | \$189.00 | \$170.10 | J51818 | |
| TORO* (6" x 52) | | \$189.00 | \$170.10 | J51808 | |

B. DECADE BOX OF 20

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|------------------------|--|----------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/Size | | Comp. | ONLY | Sumatra | Cam. |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | | \$211 | \$189.90 | — | J42605 |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | | \$234 | \$210.60 | R72965 | — |
| TORPEDO* (6-1/2" x 52) | | \$244 | \$219.60 | R72975 | J42625 |

C. VINTAGE 1990 BOX OF 20

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Maduro Wrapper | |
|------------------------|--|----------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| Shape/Size | | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO* (5-1/2" x 50) | | \$191 | \$171.90 | R54665 | |
| TORPEDO (6-1/4" x 52) | | \$208 | \$187.20 | R54685 | |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | | \$202 | \$181.80 | R54675 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | | \$202 | \$181.80 | R54655 | |

D. VINTAGE 1992 BOX OF 20

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Sumatra Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|--|----------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Shape/Size | | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| TORPEDO (6-1/4" x 52) | | \$208 | \$187.20 | R66245 | |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | | \$202 | \$181.80 | R66235 | |
| CHURCHILL* (7" x 48) | | \$202 | \$181.80 | R66215 | |

E. VINTAGE 1999 BOX OF 20

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|--|----------|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| Shape/Size | | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | | \$191 | \$171.90 | R64185 | |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | | \$202 | \$181.80 | R64195 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | | \$202 | \$181.80 | R64225 | |

F. VINTAGE 2003

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Cameroon Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|------|----------|-----------------|------------------|--|
| Shape/Size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$191 | \$171.90 | J07205 | |
| | 5 | | \$45.48 | J07203 | |
| TORO (6-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$202 | \$181.80 | J07225 | |
| | 5 | | \$47.95 | J07223 | |
| CHURCHILL* (7" x 48) | 20 | \$202 | \$181.80 | J07195 | |

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2015 TOP 25

G. VINTAGE 2006 BOX OF 20

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Maduro Wrapper | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------------|--|--|
| Shape/size | | Compare | ONLY | Item # | | |
| ROBUSTO | (5-1/2" x 50) | \$191 | \$171.90 | J79148 | | |
| TORO | (6-1/2" x 52) | \$202 | \$181.80 | J79158 | | |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 48) | \$202 | \$181.80 | J79138 | | |

H. ROCKY PATEL 20TH ANNIVERSARY

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|-----------------------------|----|----------|----------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Hond. | Mad. |
| ROTHSCHILD (4-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$207 | \$186.30 | — | — | J77978 |
| ROBUSTO GRANDE* | 20 | \$217 | \$195.30 | J51735 | J51738 | |
| (5" x 54) | 5 | | \$51.32 | J51733 | — | |
| TORO | 20 | \$240 | \$216.00 | J51745 | J51748 | |
| (6" x 52) | 5 | | \$56.50 | J51743 | — | |
| SIXTY | 20 | \$274 | \$246.60 | J51755 | — | |
| (6" x 60) | 5 | | \$64.15 | J51753 | — | |

FOR SINGLE STICK SELECTIONS VISIT
thompsoncigar.com/singles

I. THE EDGE

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------|----------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Hab. | Cor. | Mad. |
| MISSILE | (5" x 48) 25 | \$160.00 | \$144.00 | — | R85295 | R85298 |
| TORO | (6" x 52) 20 | \$139.00 | \$125.10 | — | R85255 | R85258 |
| TORPEDO* | (6" x 52) 20 | \$145.00 | \$130.50 | J53915 | R85265 | R85268 |
| BATTALION | (6" x 60) 20 | \$182.00 | \$163.80 | — | — | R85248 |
| HOWITZER | (7" x 70) 10 | \$109.50 | \$98.55 | — | J42725 | J42728 |

J. THE EDGE LITE

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Connecticut Wrapper | | |
|-----------------|------------------|----------|----------|---------------------|--|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | | |
| ROBUSTO | (5-1/2" x 50) 20 | \$137 | \$123.30 | J13845 | | |
| TORO | (6" x 52) 20 | \$151 | \$135.90 | J13855 | | |
| TORPEDO | (6" x 52) 20 | \$156 | \$140.40 | J13865 | | |
| DBL CORONA* | (7-1/2" x 52) 20 | \$162 | \$145.80 | J13835 | | |

K. THE EDGE SUMATRA

| FULL | | Honduras | | Sumatra Wrapper | | |
|------------|--------------|----------|----------|-----------------|--|--|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # | | |
| TORO* | (6" x 52) 20 | \$139 | \$125.10 | J10155 | | |
| TORPEDO | (6" x 52) 20 | \$145 | \$130.50 | J10145 | | |



ONLY \$1.50
Per Cigar

PDR VALUE LINE

We've put together a 20-count sampler of Handcrafted Toros using quality Dominican mixed fillers and binder, wrappers include the dark Maduro, smooth Connecticut, bold, complex Habano, and flavorful Cameroon.

At just \$1.50 a stick, you can't afford to pass this up!

20 Toro Sampler **ONLY \$29.95**

PDR VALUE RESERVE TORO SAMPLER (6" x 52)

5 Each of 4 Different Wrappers: 20 Cigars

5 Maduro, 5 Connecticut, 5 Cameroon, 5 Habano

Compare at \$49 ONLY \$29.95 J12435



OLIVA MASTER BLENDS 3 SAMPLER WITH CUTTER

FULL 4 Cigars Nicaraguan Wrapper

Compare at \$57.16

ONLY \$48.59 J83595

NAT SHERMAN

5 CIGARS FREE

with Nat Sherman box purchase
While Supplies Last

\$29.75
RETAIL VALUE



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A. NAT SHERMAN METROPOLITAN

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Dominican Republic | | Connecticut Wrapper | |
|----------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| Shape/Size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| UNION (4-1/2" x 50) | 18 | \$98.10 | \$88.29 | J66755 | |
| BANKER (5" x 70) | 10 | \$88.50 | \$79.65 | J28105 | |
| GORDO (6" x 60) | 18 | \$139.50 | \$125.55 | J66415 | |

B. NAT SHERMAN HOST SELECTION

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|------------------------|------|----------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/Size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Conn. | Mad. |
| HOBART (5" x 50) | 25 | \$148.75 | \$133.88 | J28065 | J28068 |
| | 10 | | \$58.55 | J28066 | J28069 |
| HAMILTON (5-1/2" x 44) | 25 | \$136.25 | \$122.63 | J28045 | - |
| | 10 | | \$54.05 | J28046 | - |
| HARRINGTON (6" x 48) | 25 | \$162.50 | \$146.25 | J28055 | - |
| | 10 | | \$63.50 | J28056 | - |
| HYDE (6" x 60) | 20 | \$170.00 | \$153.00 | J28085 | J28088 |
| HAMPTON (7" x 50) | 25 | \$173.75 | \$156.38 | J28075 | J28078 |
| | 10 | | \$67.55 | J28076 | - |

C. NAT SHERMAN TIMELESS DOMINICAN

| MEDIUM | | Dominican Republic | | Natural Wrapper | |
|-----------------------|------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Shape/Size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| DIVINOS* (5" x 50) | 20 | \$180 | \$162.00 | J28185 | |
| HERMOSO (5-1/4" x 54) | 20 | \$166 | \$149.40 | J28165 | |
| NO. 2* (6-1/4" x 52) | 20 | \$196 | \$176.40 | J28175 | |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | 20 | \$180 | \$162.00 | J28155 | |

D. NAT SHERMAN TIMELESS NICARAGUA

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | | Nicaraguan Wrapper | |
|----------------------|------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|--|
| Shape/Size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # | |
| 452 (4" x 52) | 21 | \$163.80 | \$147.20 | J54625 | |
| | 10 | | \$75.20 | J54626 | |
| 652T* (6" x 52) | 21 | \$210.00 | \$189.00 | J54635 | |
| | 10 | | \$95.00 | J54636 | |
| 660 (6" x 60) | 21 | \$210.00 | \$189.00 | J54645 | |
| | 10 | | \$95.00 | J54646 | |
| 749 (7" x 49) | 21 | \$210.00 | \$189.00 | J54655 | |
| | 10 | | \$95.00 | J54656 | |

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THE SWEET LIFE,
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DOLCE VITA

- Coffee Infused
- Sweet Tip
- Exotic



**SAVE \$38
UP TO**



Plus

\$29.95
RETAIL VALUE

**Quad
Torch
Lighter
FREE**

with Dolce Vita
box purchase
While Supplies Last

If you like a cup of coffee with your cigar, then you'll jump with caffeinated joy over the exclusive Dolce Vita Coffee Edition cigars. Handmade with a unique blend of quality Dominican fillers and binder, this smooth bodied boutique factory beauty is ideal any time of the day. The Connecticut blend is akin to a light cup of coffee, while the Maduro is similar to an espresso.

A. DOLCE VITA CAFÉ (Box of 20)

| Shape/size | | Compare | ONLY | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|--------|--------|
| | | | | Conn. | Mad. | Dual |
| FIGURADO | (4-1/2" x 54) | \$77 | \$44.95 | J06365 | J06368 | J06369 |
| SHORT TORPEDO | (4-1/2" x 54) | \$83 | \$44.95 | - | - | J29605 |
| ROBUSTO GRANDE | (5" x 54) | \$79 | \$45.95 | - | - | J20655 |
| ROBUSTO (Box Pressed) | (5" x 54) | \$83 | \$48.95 | - | - | J29595 |
| TORPEDO | (6" x 52) | \$79 | \$52.95 | - | J20658 | - |
| FIGURADO 654 | (6" x 54) | \$77 | \$46.95 | J17065 | J17068 | J17069 |
| GRAN TORPEDO | (8" x 54) | \$84 | \$56.95 | - | - | J29615 |
| GORDO (Box Pressed) | (6" x 60) | \$78 | \$55.95 | J29645 | - | - |
| LANCERO | (7" x 39) | \$84 | \$53.95 | J20645 | J20638 | J20625 |
| PETITE CORONA (Box of 25) | (5" x 30) | \$74 | \$45.95 | J06375 | J06378 | - |

If you like Baccarat, you'll love these!

These Sweet tips are made with a classic blend of Dominican tobaccos in a small boutique factory, and finished off with a golden Connecticut wrapper, giving them a smooth, mellow flavor and just a hint of sweetness.

B. DOLCE VITA SWEET TIP (Box of 20)

| Shape/size | | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------|----------------|--------|
| | | | | |
| CORONA | (5" x 38) | \$66 | \$49.95 | J06335 |
| FIGURADO | (5" x 54) | \$70 | \$53.95 | J37015 |
| LONSDALE | (6" x 42) | \$68 | \$49.95 | J06345 |
| TORO | (6" x 50) | \$70 | \$50.95 | J06355 |
| GORDO | (6" x 60) | \$78 | \$57.95 | J29635 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 48) | \$72 | \$52.95 | J06325 |
| SWEET CIGARILLOS (Box of 60) | (4-3/4" x 28) | \$67 | \$46.95 | J17055 |

Always coveted for their smoothness, amazing aromas, and top-notch Dominican long fillers, Exotic, offers a zippy line of cigars infused with unusual oils, unique herbs, and bodacious botanicals.

C. DOLCE VITA EXOTIC (Box of 20)

| Shape/size | | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------|-----------|---------|----------------|--------|
| | | | | |
| PETITE CORONA | (4" x 38) | \$62 | \$45.95 | J36995 |
| ROBUSTO GORDO | (5" x 54) | \$82 | \$52.95 | J37005 |

Double Down

Battle of the Brands™

There's no way to discover your next favorite cigar unless you try something new, right? That's why Double Down is perfect. Thompson Cigar expertly pairs two different cigars so you can get what you know you love and try what may be your next new love. You'll receive two different five packs that complement each other and make an ideal combo. Come on... live a little. Branch out and make your next order a Double Down, only from Thompson Cigar.



GURKHA TYPHOON
Gordo (4" x 60)
NUB #460
Rothschild (4" x 60)

Connecticut Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$92.91
ONLY \$29.95
#886548

CONNECTICUT Combo

CONNECTICUT Combo

MACANUDO GOLD #3 Robusto (5-1/2" x 50)
MONTECRISTO WHITE #3 Robusto (5-1/2" x 44)



CAO BRAZILIA
Gol (5" x 56)
ALEC BRADLEY NICA PURO
Toro (6" x 52)

Brazilian & Habano Wrappers
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$67.45
ONLY \$39.95
#886636

90 RATED Combo



MACANUDO CAFE
Hyde Park (5-1/2" x 49)
PERDOMO RESERVE CHAMPAGNE CONNECTICUT
Robusto (5" x 54)

Connecticut Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$74.70
ONLY \$39.95
#886652

CONNECTICUT Combo



ALEC BRADLEY PRENSADO
Gran Toro (6" x 54)
PUNCH RARE COROJO
Magnum (5-1/4" x 54)

Corojo Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$96.70
ONLY \$39.95
#886670

MEDIUM - FULL Combo



AGING ROOM LA BOHEME PITTORE
Robusto (5-1/4" x 52)
ROCKY PATEL EDGE NICARAGUA
Torpedo (6" x 52)

Habano Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$95.95
ONLY \$39.95
#886628

90 PLUS RATED Combo



MACANUDO INSPIRADO WHITE
Robusto (5" x 50)
MONTECRISTO WHITE ESPECIAL
#3 (5-1/2" x 44)

Connecticut Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$82.65
ONLY \$44.95
#886694

CONNECTICUT Combo



ALEC BRADLEY PRENSADO
Robusto (5" x 50)
ROCKY PATEL SUNGROWN
Toro (6-1/2" x 52)

Corojo & Maduro Wrappers
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$95.25
ONLY \$44.95
#886630

92 RATED Combo



**SAVE
UP TO
\$87.55**

Connecticut Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$94.65
**ONLY
\$44.95**
#886631

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COMBOS**

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**ROCKY PATEL
DECADE**
Robusto (5" x 50)

**HAMMER
& SICKLE
HERMITAGE**
Toro (6" x 54)

Sumatra &
Habano Wrappers
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$95.75
**ONLY
\$44.95**
#886632

91 RATED Combo



**ROCKY PATEL
AUTUMN
COLLECTION**
Churchill (5-1/2" x 50)

**MONTECRISTO
WHITE VINTAGE**
Dbl Corona (6-1/4" x 50)

Connecticut
Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$111.75
**ONLY
\$44.95**
#886591

CONNECTICUT Combo



**COHIBA
NICARAGUA**
Robusto (5" x 50)

**OLIVA MASTER
BLENDS 3**
Robusto (5" x 50)

Nicaraguan
Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$125.87
**ONLY
\$44.95**
#886700

MEDIUM - FULL Combo



**EMPRESS
OF CUBA**
Toro (6" x 52)

**MONTECRISTO
#3** (5-1/2" x 44)

Connecticut
Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$88.15
**ONLY
\$44.95**
#886615

CONNECTICUT Combo



**DIAMOND CROWN
RESERVE**
Robusto (5-1/2" x 54)

**MACANUDO
GOLD CRYSTAL**
Robusto (5-1/2" x 50)

Connecticut
Wrapper
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$108.20
**ONLY
\$49.95**
#886686

90 PLUS RATED Combo



**MONTECRISTO
PILOTICO**
Toro (6-1/4" x 50)

**COHIBA
NICARAGUA**
Robusto (5" x 50)

Ecuadorian &
Nicaraguan Wrappers
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$156.08
**ONLY
\$49.95**
#886693

MEDIUM Combo



**DIAMOND CROWN
JULIUS CAESAR**
Toro (4-3/4" x 52)

**ROCKY PATEL
20TH
ANNIVERSARY**
Toro (6" x 52)

Ecuadorian &
Honduran Wrappers
5 each (10 Total)
Compare \$128.75
**ONLY
\$59.95**
#886676

MEDIUM - FULL Combo

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39

LEAF by Oscar • Handmade in Honduras

Individually wrapped in "Whole Tobacco Leaf"



New!

These guys look a little rough at first glance. That's because the outer wrapper isn't cellophane, it's an actual whole tobacco leaf. Remove it and discover your very own personal indulgence in handmade cigar form. Beneath the protective full leaf casing, resides a flawlessly rolled little slice of heaven. Experience four extremely popular and innovative varieties of Leaf by Oscar cigars in one purchase. They range from smooth to medium in body yet each one is mellow and flavorful from first puff to last. Carefully selected Honduran long fillers, binder, and wrapper are expertly hand rolled with the greatest care.

LEAF BY OSCAR TORO SAMPLER Honduras **SMOOTH / MEDIUM**

1 each of 4 Wrappers: 1 Sumatra, 1 Connecticut, 1 Corojo, 1 Maduro

(6" x 52) Compare at \$36 **ONLY \$32.40** J52883

(6" x 60) Compare at \$42 **ONLY \$37.80** J67943



SAVE more than 36% off of MSRP!

VICTOR SINCLAIR d'Artagnan

Our exclusive cigar patiently handmade in the Dominican Republic, is a smooth, satisfying mixed-filler cigar measuring in at a slim 6" x 30. Try 40 (ten tubes, four cigars per tube), of these convenient and affordable smokes, rolled to a very high standard.

(6" x 30) **SMOOTH** Dominican Republic
Box of 40 (10 tubes of 4 each)
Compare at \$62.95 **ONLY \$39.95**

Select from:

- Connecticut R90885
- Maduro R90888



829

CHURCHILL
MADURO
WRAPPER

Puro Dominicano

SAVE \$184

Box of 100 Churchills

Straight from the factory, we bring you value priced 100 count boxes of these deliciously tasty, everyday Dominicans. Handcrafted in silky Connecticut or hearty Maduro wrapper and filled with a flavorful array of Dominican fillers, 829 boxes are a reminder that everyday pleasures are as satisfying to your taste buds as they are on your budget.

829 CHURCHILL (7" x 50) Dominican Republic

SMOOTH / MEDIUM Box of 100
Compare at \$304 **ONLY \$119⁹⁵**

Your Choice of Wrapper:

Connecticut J48765 or Maduro J48768



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ROCKY PATEL FUMAS



**SAVE
UP TO
\$120**



Great taste and great price are yours with these superb Rocky Patel Olde World Fumas. Made from the same premium tobaccos used to create all legendary Rocky Patel Olde World cigars, these gems cannot disappoint.

ROCKY PATEL OLDE WORLD RESERVE FUMAS (Bundle of 20)

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|----------------|-------|----------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| Shape/size | Comp. | ONLY | Conn. | Maduro | Corojo |
| TORO (6" x 52) | \$170 | \$49.95 | J54603 | J54609 | J54602 |

The Vintage line are some of Rocky Patel's best cigars that use many of the finest tobaccos on the planet. To make sure that none of these go to waste, we've had them assemble some incredibly inexpensive cigars using the clippings from the regular smokes that sell for upwards of \$11 apiece. Supplies are limited so get in on these now!

ROCKY PATEL FUMAS (Bundle of 20)

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | Vintage 1990 | Vintage 1992 | Vintage 1999 | Vintage 2003 |
|-------------------|-------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Shape/size | Comp. | ONLY | Maduro | Sumatra | Conn. | Cameroon |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | \$125 | \$37.95 | J54618 | J51685 | J54615 | J51605 |
| TORO (6" x 52) | \$135 | \$39.95 | J54608 | J51675 | J54605 | J51695 |

Don Rafael

VINTAGE 2004

EXCEPTIONAL EVERYDAY SMOKES

Crafted by master blender Jose Dominguez of Victor Sinclair fame, the popular Don Rafael Vintage 2004 features premium Dominican tobaccos that have been well aged and cured to perfection.

AS LOW AS
\$1.90
Per Cigar

SAVE UP TO \$48

DON RAFAEL VINTAGE 2004

Box of 20 - Select from Connecticut or Maduro Wrappers

| SMOOTH / MEDIUM | | Dom. Republic | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|----------------------------|-------|----------------|--------|-------------------|--|
| Shape/size | Comp. | ONLY | Mad. | Conn. | |
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | \$80 | \$37.95 | - | J17185 | |
| PETITE TORP. (5-1/2" x 52) | \$85 | \$39.95 | - | J17175 | |
| TORO (5-3/4" x 50) | \$85 | \$39.95 | J13198 | J13195 | |
| GORDO (6" x 60) | \$93 | \$44.95 | - | J38335 | |
| CHURCHILL (7-1/2" x 50) | \$90 | \$42.95 | J17168 | J17165 | |

DON RAFAEL VINTAGE 2004 TINS

SMOOTH Dominican Republic Connecticut Wrapper
(3-1/4" x 28). Quantity of 50 (5 tins of 10)

Compare at \$65 **ONLY \$34.95** J38345



YOUR CHOICE
DOMINICAN

or
NICARAGUAN

ONLY
\$1.25
Per Cigar

40 FOR \$49.95

40 CHURCHILL SAMPLER

SMOOTH / MEDIUM (7" x 50)

Assorted Wrappers

DOMINICAN

Compare at \$85

J29405

or **NICARAGUAN**

Compare at \$95

J54185

ROCKY PATEL PRESTIGE SAMPLER

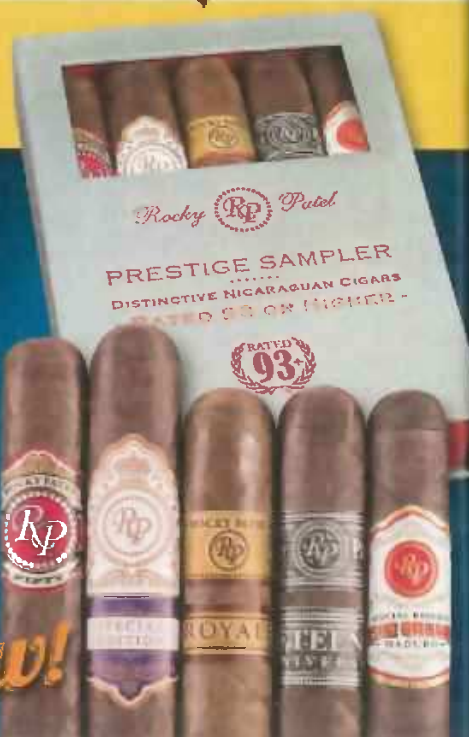
Why commit when you can play the field? This amazing five cigar Robusto sampler from world famous Rocky Patel will take you places you've never dared dream of. Rocky Patel is a brand known the globe over for the finest hand rolled, premium imported cigars. The reason? Their endless pursuit of perfection. You can see it, feel it, and taste it in every one of these richly flavored and superbly balanced Robustos. Indulge to your heart's content in Rocky's five best and most popular brands ~ the Fifty Five, Special Edition, Royale, 15th Anniversary, and award winning Sun Grown Maduro. Not one could disappoint. And all will supremely satisfy.

(6" x 50) Nicaragua Assorted Wrappers

Compare at \$49.40

ONLY \$44.95
J79265

New!



42 1-800-237-2559

MON.-FRI.: 7AM-10PM; SAT.-SUN.: 8AM-7PM E.T.

5 CIGARS FREE & ALEC BRADLEY

QUAD TORCH LIGHTER

with box purchase While Supplies Last

\$129.45 COMBINED
RETAIL VALUE



ALEC BRADLEY

A. PRENSADO

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | Corojo Wrapper | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------|----------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 50) | 20 | \$198 | \$178.20 | R93125 |
| CORONA GORDA | (5-5/8" x 46) | 20 | \$190 | \$171.00 | R93105 |
| GRAN TORO | (6" x 54) | 20 | \$253 | \$227.70 | R93115 |
| TORPEDO | (6-1/8" x 52) | 20 | \$253 | \$227.70 | R93135 |
| CHURCHILL* | (7" x 48) | 20 | \$222 | \$199.80 | R93095 |
| | | 10 | | \$104.90 | R93093 |

B. PRENSADO LOST ART

Everything about this masterpiece satisfies. Within it lie not three or four, but five different, hand selected tobaccos from the finest Central American growers. You'll find yourself enthralled by the look and the feel, but mostly by the pleasure of the medium to full-bodied smoke itself.

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | Honduran Wrapper | | |
|---------------|-----------|----------|------------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 52) | 20 | \$198.00 | \$178.20 | J63485 |
| GRAN TORO* | (6" x 52) | 20 | \$219.00 | \$197.10 | J63475 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 48) | 20 | \$250.00 | \$225.00 | J63445 |

C. BLACK MARKET

| MEDIUM | | Honduras | Maduro Wrapper | | |
|------------|---------------|----------|----------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5-1/4" x 54) | 22 | \$168.30 | \$151.47 | J07758 |
| | | 5 | | \$36.93 | J07753 |
| TORO | (6" x 50) | 22 | \$189.20 | \$170.28 | J07768 |
| | | 5 | | \$41.20 | J07763 |
| GORDO | (6" x 60) | 22 | \$203.50 | \$183.15 | J07748 |
| | | 5 | | \$44.13 | J07743 |
| TORPEDO | (6-1/8" x 54) | 22 | \$192.50 | \$173.25 | J07778 |
| CHURCHILL* | (7" x 50) | 22 | \$192.50 | \$173.25 | J07738 |

D. BLACK MARKET ESTELI

These babies are robust with a medium to full flavor profile you'll grow to love more with every puff. There's cocoa and spice, pepper and earth, amazingly balanced, also a hint of sweet cream and coffee make a subtle appearance as well.

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | Nicaraguan Wrapper | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 52) | 22 | \$166.10 | \$149.49 | J59795 |
| GORDO | (6" x 60) | 22 | \$202.40 | \$182.16 | J59835 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 52) | 22 | \$192.50 | \$173.25 | J59825 |

E. SANCTUM

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Honduras | Corojo Wrapper | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------|----------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 52) | 20 | \$152 | \$136.80 | J49175 |
| TORO* | (6" x 52) | 20 | \$163 | \$146.70 | J49185 |
| GORDO | (6" x 60) | 20 | \$179 | \$161.10 | J49195 |
| DBL GORDO | (8-1/2" x 60) | 20 | \$210 | \$189.00 | J49205 |

F. TEMPUS

| FULL | | Honduras | | Choice of Wrapper | |
|----------------------------|------|----------|----------|-------------------|---------|
| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Maduro | Criollo |
| TERRA NOVO (5" x 50) | 20 | \$157.00 | \$141.30 | R77868 | R77865 |
| MEDIUS (6" x 52) | 20 | \$169.00 | \$152.10 | R77918 | — |
| IMPERATOR (6-1/8" x 52) | 20 | \$190.00 | \$171.00 | R77888 | — |
| CENTURIA* (7" x 49) | 20 | \$179.00 | \$161.10 | R77908 | R77875 |

G. TEMPUS NICARAGUA

| MEDIUM / FULL | | Nicaragua | Jalapa Wrapper | | |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|----------|--------|
| Shape/size | | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
| TERRA NOVO | (5" x 50) | 20 | \$157.00 | \$141.30 | J51355 |
| | | 5 | | \$37.83 | J51353 |
| MEDIUS 6 | (6" x 52) | 20 | \$169.00 | \$152.10 | J51345 |
| | | 5 | | \$42.25 | J51343 |
| CENTURIA* | (7" x 49) | 20 | \$179.00 | \$161.10 | J51335 |
| | | 5 | | \$42.78 | J51333 |

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BACCARAT cigars are hand rolled in Honduras of prime, well-aged long filler Cuban-seed leaves. This exquisite combination of Honduran filler tobacco and a silky smooth Connecticut wrapper finished with a sweetened cap, creates an exceptionally mellow smoke packed with flavor.

BACCARAT (Box of 25)

| Shape/size | Honduras | Compare | ONLY | Choice of Wrapper | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------|----------------|-------------------|--------|
| | | | | Conn. | Mad. |
| PLATINUM | (4-3/4" x 32) | \$97.50 | \$58.50 | N91655 | - |
| ROTHSCHILD | (5" x 50) | \$132.50 | \$79.50 | N91355 | J79408 |
| PETITE CORONA | (5-1/2" x 42) | \$122.50 | \$73.50 | N91255 | - |
| LUCHADORES | (6" x 43) | \$130.00 | \$78.00 | N91455 | - |
| TORO | (6" x 50) | \$137.50 | \$82.50 | R03175 | - |
| GORDO | (6" x 60) | \$162.50 | \$97.50 | J40275 | - |
| #1 | (7" x 44) | \$137.50 | \$82.50 | N94055 | - |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 50) | \$145.00 | \$87.00 | N91555 | J79388 |
| KING | (8" x 52) | \$160.00 | \$96.00 | R03155 | J79398 |
| BELICOSO (Box 20) | (6" x 52) | \$128.00 | \$76.80 | R03165 | J79378 |

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SMOOTH (3-1/4" x 20) Ten 10-packs (100 total)

Compare at \$80 **ONLY \$49.95**

3 FLAVORS: **CLASSIC** J42155 **RUM** J42175
(sweet tip) **COGNAC** J42165

(Minis not eligible for FREE Shipping or Cigars)



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SELECCIÓN ESPECIAL Box of 50

| Shape/size | Connecticut Wrapper | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|------------|---------------------|-------|----------------|--------|
| | | | | |
| ROBUSTO | (5" x 52) | \$100 | \$59.95 | J23245 |
| TORPEDO | (6" x 52) | \$104 | \$72.95 | J23075 |
| CHURCHILL | (7" x 50) | \$101 | \$69.95 | J23065 |



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Triple refined butane, Four 1.9 oz. cans
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12 HUMIDITY CONTROL PACKETS

Lasts 60 to 90 days, replace when the packet becomes "firm" when squeezed.

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| Humidity % | Item # |
|------------|---------|
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NICARAGUAN DOMINICAN

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HONDURAN SHORT RUN RESERVE Bundle of 20

| Shape/size | ONLY | Conn. | Sum. | Mad. |
|-------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| ROBUSTO (5" x 50) | \$39.95 | J31843 | J31845 | J31848 |
| TORO (6" x 50) | \$39.95 | J33103 | J33105 | J33108 |
| CHURCHILL (7-1/2" x 50) | \$39.95 | J31823 | J31825 | J31828 |

NICARAGUAN SHORT RUN RESERVE Bundle of 20

| Shape/size | ONLY | Item # |
|-----------------------|---------|--------|
| ROBUSTO (4-3/4" x 50) | \$37.95 | J43465 |
| TORO (6-1/8" x 50) | \$38.95 | J43455 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | \$39.95 | J43445 |

DOMINICAN SHORT RUN RESERVE Bundle of 20

| Shape/size | ONLY | Item # |
|------------------------|---------|--------|
| GORDO SHORTY (4" x 60) | \$39.95 | J36915 |
| TORPEDO (6" x 52) | \$42.95 | J36935 |
| TORO GORDO (6" x 60) | \$42.95 | J36925 |
| CHURCHILL (7" x 48) | \$39.95 | J36905 |

80 Cigars
SAVE UP TO 44%



| Bundles | Compare | ONLY |
|---------------|----------|---------|
| 2 (40 Cigars) | \$85.90 | \$59.95 |
| 3 (60 Cigars) | \$128.85 | \$79.95 |
| 4 (80 Cigars) | \$171.80 | \$94.95 |



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on your ENTIRE order with COHIBA box purchase

A. COHIBA

| Shape/size | Dominican Republic | Cameroon Wrapper | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|--|--------------------|------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| CORONA MINOR (4" x 42) | 25 | | | \$287.25 | \$175.88 | R07935 |
| ROBUSTO FINO (4-3/4" x 47) | 25 | | | \$374.75 | \$233.69 | R07925 |
| TORO TUBOS (5" x 60) | 10 | | | \$194.90 | \$119.73 | J05455 |
| CORONA (5-1/8" x 42) | 25 | | | \$374.75 | \$230.56 | R08415 |
| CRYSTAL CORONA** (5-1/2" x 42) | 20 | | | \$359.80 | \$221.95 | R08765 |
| <i>(tubo) **Box of 20 - ONLY Crystal Coronas come in glass tubes</i> | | | | | | |
| CHURCHILL* (7" x 49) | 25 | | | \$512.25 | \$316.50 | R08755 |

B. COHIBA NICARAGUA

| Shape/size | Nicaragua | Nicaraguan Wrapper | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| CORONA (4" x 45) | 16 | | | \$183.84 | \$147.07 | J42005 |
| ROBUSTO CRYSTAL (5" x 50) | 8 | | | \$110.92 | \$95.94 | J42025 |
| TORO* (5-1/2" x 54) | 16 | | | \$247.84 | \$198.27 | J42035 |

C. COHIBA BLACK LABEL

| Shape/size | Dominican Republic | Maduro Wrapper | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| PEQUEÑOS (5 tins of 6) (4" x 36) | 30 | | | \$104.95 | \$64.50 | R71585 |
| CORONA (5-1/2" x 42) | 25 | | | \$374.75 | \$230.56 | R62685 |
| GIGANTE (6" x 60) | 20 | | | \$429.80 | \$265.70 | R79055 |

D. COHIBA BLUE LABEL

| Shape/size | Dominican Republic | Honduran Wrapper | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Item # |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| ROTHSCHILD (4-1/2" x 50) | 20 | | | \$179.80 | \$143.84 | J76935 |
| ROBUSTO (5-1/2" x 50) | 20 | | | \$199.80 | \$159.84 | J76925 |
| TORO (6" x 54) | 20 | | | \$209.80 | \$167.84 | J76945 |
| CHURCHILL (7-1/2" x 50) | 20 | | | \$219.80 | \$175.84 | J76915 |

COHIBA



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Socorro
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Francesca

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are a value-priced cigar featuring a smooth to medium wrapper and a short filler blend of Cuban seed Nicaraguan tobaccos.

CUBAN ROUNDS SMOOTH / MEDIUM

Churchill (7" x 48) Bundle of 20

Compare at \$64.80

ONLY \$39.99

Plus
SAVE \$24

CONNECTICUT J78625
MADURO J73888
NATURAL J73885

HOYO DE MONTERREY

A. HOYO DE MONTERREY

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | EMS | Maduro |
|--------------------------|------|----------|----------|--------|--------|
| SABROSOS (5" x 40) | 25 | \$79.75 | \$59.94 | N93544 | N93588 |
| CHURCHILL (6-1/4" x 45) | 25 | \$142.25 | \$107.13 | N03355 | — |
| GOVERNOR (6-1/2" x 50) | 25 | \$147.25 | \$111.50 | R02914 | R02938 |
| DBL CORONA (6-3/4" x 48) | 25 | \$154.75 | \$117.13 | N03755 | — |

B. EXCALIBUR

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Conn. | Maduro |
|------------------------------|------|----------|----------|--------|--------|
| EPICURE (5-1/4" x 50) | 20 | \$147.80 | \$105.70 | R13695 | R13698 |
| No. 1 (7-1/4" x 52) | 20 | \$163.80 | \$118.95 | N46044 | N46088 |
| | 10 | | \$64.48 | N46045 | N46089 |
| No. 2 (6-3/4" x 47) | 20 | \$161.80 | \$115.95 | N46144 | N46188 |
| | 10 | | \$62.98 | N46145 | — |
| No. 3 (6-1/8" x 48) | 20 | \$157.80 | \$112.95 | N46444 | N46488 |
| | 10 | | \$61.48 | N46204 | — |
| No. 4 (5-5/8" x 46) | 20 | \$137.80 | \$98.45 | N46344 | — |
| | 10 | | \$54.23 | N46345 | — |
| No. 5 (6-1/4" x 45) | 20 | \$139.80 | \$99.70 | N46544 | — |
| No. 660 (6" x 60) | 20 | \$169.80 | \$125.20 | J39185 | — |
| SHORT CRYSTAL* (5-1/4" x 50) | 10 | \$84.90 | \$59.60 | J39195 | — |

C. EXCALIBUR CAMEROON

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------------------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| MERLIN (5-1/2" x 50) | 20 | \$143.80 | \$102.45 | R27014 |
| | 10 | | \$56.23 | R27016 |
| KING ARTHUR (6-1/4" x 45) | 20 | \$141.80 | \$101.20 | R27024 |
| GALAHAD (6-3/4" x 47) | 20 | \$159.80 | \$114.20 | R27034 |
| LANCELOT* (7-1/4" x 54) | 20 | \$165.80 | \$118.70 | R27044 |
| | 10 | | \$64.35 | R27045 |

D. LA AMISTAD SILVER by AJ Fernandez

| Shape/size | Qty. | Comp. | ONLY | Item # |
|-------------------------|------|----------|----------|--------|
| ROBUSTO* (5" x 50) | 20 | \$139.80 | \$125.82 | J80285 |
| PANCHO (5-1/2" x 52) | 20 | \$149.80 | \$134.82 | J80275 |
| CHURCHILL (6-7/8" x 48) | 20 | \$159.80 | \$143.82 | J80265 |

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| Brand | Size | Wrp. | Qty. | ONLY | Item # |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|------|------|----------------|--------|
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| CONNECTICUT | (4-1/4" x 32) | CT | 10 | \$24.50 | T08485 |
| MADURO | (4-1/4" x 32) | MAD | 10 | \$24.50 | T08488 |
| B. AL CAPONE | | | | | |
| SWEETS COGNAC | (3-1/8" x 20) | NAT | 10 | \$7.99 | T89095 |
| SLIMS RUM | (3-1/8" x 20) | NAT | 10 | \$7.99 | T89085 |
| JAMAICAN BLAZE | (3-1/2" x 20) | NAT | 10 | \$7.99 | T89115 |
| C. CAMACHO MACHITO | | | | | |
| CRIOLLO | (4" x 32) | CRI | 6 | \$19.98 | T53306 |
| COROJO | (4" x 32) | COR | 6 | \$19.98 | T53308 |
| D. C.A.O. | | | | | |
| BELLA VANILLA | (4" x 30) | NAT | 10 | \$17.49 | T46207 |
| MOONFRANCE | (4" x 30) | NAT | 10 | \$17.49 | T43457 |
| E. COHIBA | | | | | |
| PEQUEÑOS | (4-1/8" x 36) | CAM | 6 | \$20.99 | T27155 |
| MINI CIGARILLO | (3-7/8" x 24) | CAM | 10 | \$18.99 | T54475 |
| F. DAVIDOFF CIGARILLOS | | | | | |
| MINI | (3-1/2" x 24) | SUM | 10 | \$9.95 | T30365 |
| PRIMEROS | (4-1/8" x 34) | CT | 6 | \$26.10 | R75497 |
| GOLD | (3-1/2" x 24) | SUM | 20 | \$19.90 | T76105 |
| G. GRAN HABANO | | | | | |
| MINI BLACK | (3-1/2" x 20) | HAB | 20 | \$9.95 | T04235 |
| MINI GREEN | (3-1/2" x 20) | CT | 20 | \$9.95 | T04215 |
| H. HOYO de MONTERREY EXCALIBUR | | | | | |
| MINIATURES | (3" x 22) | EMS | 20 | \$12.19 | T28089 |
| I. MACANUDO | | | | | |
| CAFÉ MINIATURE | (3-1/4" x 24) | CT | 8 | \$14.36 | T35456 |
| CAFÉ ASCOTS | (4-1/8" x 32) | CT | 10 | \$18.49 | T09265 |
| GOLD ASCOT TINS | (4-1/8" x 32) | CT | 10 | \$19.49 | T79035 |
| J. MAKER'S MARK | | | | | |
| CIGARILLOS | (4" x 30) | SUM | 10 | \$25.00 | T33335 |
| K. MONTECRISTO | | | | | |
| MEMORIES | (4" x 33) | NAT | 6 | \$11.87 | T40365 |
| L. PADRÓN | | | | | |
| CORTICOS | (4-1/4" x 36) | MAD | 6 | \$20.10 | T82360 |
| M. PUNCH | | | | | |
| CIGARILLOS | (4" x 24) | EMS | 20 | \$14.19 | T31675 |
| N. ROCKY PATEL | | | | | |
| VINTAGE '99 MINIS | (4-1/4" x 32) | CT | 10 | \$17.00 | T77875 |
| O. ROMEO y JULIETA | | | | | |
| MINIS MILD | (2-7/8" x 20) | NAT | 20 | \$11.85 | T18185 |
| MINIS AROMA | (2-7/8" x 20) | NAT | 20 | \$11.85 | T30555 |
| 1875 BULLY | (4" x 38) | SUM | 6 | \$15.04 | T41935 |
| P. TATIANA | | | | | |
| VANILLA | (3-1/2" x 26) | NAT | 10 | \$16.80 | T30325 |

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| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
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| Shape/size | Comp. | ONLY Conn. Hab. |
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NUB CAFÉ

SMOOTH / MEDIUM

| Shape/size | Nicaragua | Qty. | Compare | ONLY | Choice of Wrapper | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|------|----------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | Sumatra ESPRESSO | Sumatra MACCHIATO | Connecticut CAPPUCCINO |
| PETITE ROBUSTO (3-3/4" x 54) | | 20 | \$123.00 | \$104.55 | J41825 | J41835 | J41815 |
| PETITE CORONA (4" x 38) | | 25 | \$107.64 | \$91.49 | J41795 | J41805 | J41785 |
| GORDO (4" x 60) | | 20 | \$143.50 | \$121.98 | J41855 | J41865 | J41845 |
| TUBOS (4-1/2" x 30) | | 20 | \$71.76 | \$61.00 | J41915 | J41925 | J41905 |
| CORONA (5" x 42) | | 20 | \$123.00 | \$104.55 | J41885 | J41895 | J41875 |



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|---------------|---------------------|-------|--------|
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HOW TO SPEAK CIGAR

SIZES: Measuring system for cigars is done with length being shown in inches and thickness (or diameter) of a cigar in units of 64 (64 is equal to 1 inch). Therefore, 5" x 48 cigar is, 5 inches long and 3/4" diameter (1/64" x 48).

FILLER: Inner tobacco bulk of the cigar

BINDER: Leaf that holds the filler together

WRAPPER: The outer tobacco leaf covering of a cigar

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- Colorado, Connecticut, Sungrown, and Natural (Med. Brown)
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Manuel Quesada at his office in Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic.

Photographer: Dennis M. Rivera Pichardo/Bloomberg

Get Ready for the Cuban Cigar Wars

As Trump mulls changes to Obama's opening, a legendary exile prepares to confront his communist rivals in the American market.

by Jonathan Levin

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He's insulted by what he views as an uneven, inferior product and infuriated that it's held in such high esteem around the world. Sure, Cuba's clay-rich soil produces terrific tobacco, but the dedication to the craft of cigar rolling has evaporated under communist rule. "We have nothing to fear from that country," he belts out in near-perfect English imbued with a hint of southern twang he picked up over the years. "There's no pride, there's no care."

GENC0049005

Ever since John F. Kennedy slapped the embargo on Cuba, the communists and the exiles have never competed against each other in the U.S. market. What will happen when they do is a favorite topic in cigar circles. America represents about a third of the \$21 billion global cigar market, which Cuba would love to tap and producers like Quesada definitely do not want to lose.

There's no telling when the sanctions might finally end . President Donald Trump has yet to officially weigh in on Cuba relations. (A pronouncement of some type is expected soon.) But ever since his predecessor Barack Obama began re-establishing ties with the island in 2014, there's been a greater sense of urgency in the cigar world to planning for the time when wrappers tagged "Habana, Cuba" appear in U.S. shops.

"We talk about it all day long," says Quesada, who turned 70 in April. "We will give them the fight of their life. We're not unprepared."

The scion of a century-old Cuban tobacco clan, he was 13 when the Castro troops stormed his father's tobacco brokerage. Manuel Jr. fled to Miami with his mother and siblings; Manuel Sr. was forced to stay behind for a year to teach the bureaucrats his business. It happened to all the families; the communists nationalized nearly all commerce on the island where Spanish occupiers stumbled upon tobacco five centuries ago.

The tobacco refugees scattered to Florida, the Caribbean, Central America, even the Canary Islands off the coast of Africa, searching for soil and climactic conditions like Cuba's, the perfect combination for producing rich, slow-burning leaves. They recreated their old labels.

Today, there are two called Partagás, two called La Gloria Cubana, two called Montecristo, two called Romeo y Julieta, and two called Hoyo de Monterrey—one made for the U.S. market, the other produced in Cuba to be sold everywhere else. It's the same duality that reigns in the rum industry: Bacardi produces the expat version of Havana Club, while the Cuban government has partnered with Pernod Ricard to distill its Havana Club; the two sides have been feuding in court for years over control of the trademark.

Almost all the cigar refugees would in time sell their brand rights, and they eventually made their way into the Scandinavian Tobacco Group A/S and the U.K.'s Imperial Brands Plc. (Imperial is aggressively playing both sides)

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The Quesadas kept the business in the family, cultivating a 155-acre farm in the Dominican Republic and also sourcing leaves for its blends from Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Ecuador, Indonesia, the U.S. and Peru. Some of the blends, in fact, have elements of the old Cuban flavor. In the 1960s, someone managed to smuggle a supply of seeds off the island, and the company today grows five varieties of Cuban tobacco.

"A little envelope with grams of seed will grow a whole country," Quesada says.

That Cuban tobacco grown in Cuba soil is a superior raw material to that found anywhere else on Earth is of little debate among the cognoscenti. There's just something about the orange-hued clay of the Pinar del Rio valley that runs along the island's western tip. Where there's some disagreement is whether that raw-material edge always translates into a better finished product.

For Giuseppe Rufo, the cigar sommelier at London's Wellesley hotel, the answer is an unequivocal yes. He finds Cuban cigars so far superior that he refuses to stock anything else in the hotel's walk-in humidor, the U.K.'s largest. But Jorge Luis Armenteros, who trains cigar experts at Princeton-based Tobacconist University, sees things a bit as Quesada does. The communist government just doesn't have the entrepreneurial spirit, he says, to keep pace with the exiled artisans and newcomers who've taken up the craft in surrounding countries.

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The Quesada tobacco plantation in Santa Cruz de Mao, Dominican Republic.
Courtesy: Quesada Cigars

Today, Fonseca is one of four brands that Quesada Cigars sells. Each brand contains multiple lines; each line contains multiple shapes and sizes. They consistently make their way onto lists of the world's best smokes compiled by *Cigar Aficionado* and *Robb Report*.

Quesada never doubted he'd come face to face with his old Cuban nemesis at some point, and he figures there's at least one surefire way to ensure he can profit from such a scenario: striking an accord over the Fonseca name, with Havana agreeing to have his company distribute the Cuban versions in the U.S.—or possibly allowing him to make his own cigars with Cuban tobacco. Both sides would profit instead of squandering time and money in court. (There are many other elements to Quesada's plan that he didn't want to discuss publicly.) Habanos SA, a unit of Cubatabaco, didn't respond to requests for comment.

The incentive to avoid a drawn-out legal battle will be great for both sides, says Frank Herrera, a lawyer who knows how messy such disputes can be. One of his clients, Miami's Guantanamera Cigars Co., got sucked into a more than decade-long court battle after the Cuban government launched its own product of the same name and claimed the American producer was misleading people into believing its cigar was from the island—*Guantanamera* is a popular Cuban folk song. The case is ongoing.

"Before we even get to that boiling point, these companies will find some middle ground," Herrera says.

The most famous tussle is *Cohiba v. Cohiba*, over whether General Cigar Co. has the right to the U.S. trademark. Cubatabaco, which makes Cohibas of its own, has been trying to cancel that trademark in a case that's been dragging on for 20 years. The backstory might be one reason for the Cubans' persistence: Cohiba was created especially for Castro back in the 1960s.

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Quesada has made a nice life for himself and his family in the Dominican Republic, where one of his two daughters works with him in the business, along with a niece and nephew. He lives in a house he built in the La Rinconada neighborhood, with a pool and a man-cave stocked with a chaotic assortment of books, CDs, distilled beverages and, of course, copious amounts of cigars. He always wears a shirt with pockets, because he needs a place to stash his “children,” as he calls them. (If his wife asks, he smokes one or two a day, tops.)

GENC0049009

The cigar industry has grown in Quesada’s lifetime and come under new pressures. Give him an opening, and he’ll rant about the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s plan to mandate that cancer-warning labels be slapped on his carefully crafted and varnished wooden boxes.

But the process, for the most part, hasn’t changed since the days of the Spaniards in Cuba. At a palm-thatched barn about an hour from the border with Haiti, workers rely on time-honored methods to prepare recently-harvested tobacco. Quesada buries his nose in a pile of leaves. “Beautiful!” he exclaims, describing them as having just hint of sweetness.

Nearby, a man in a tank-top prepares a pile for delivery to the factory with the elaborateness of a religious ceremony. The leaves have to be just wet enough that they won’t crack during the journey, and he occasionally dips a shrub called azahar in a water basin and flicks the shrub at the tobacco. The tap-tap-tap of the droplets tell him when there’s sufficient moisture.

It is this dedication to the craft that Quesada swears you won’t find back in Cuba.

Looking out at the lights of the Santiago skyline and the tobacco fields beyond, a glass of Barceló Imperial rum in one hand and a Quesada Keg cigar in the other, he expounded on this point a while the night before.

“Cuba has that image that cigars are Cuba. In spite of everything they’ve done to damage that, they still have it.”

“But it’s not theirs. It’s ours.”

—With Ezra Fieser

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What's In A Brand Name?

The peculiar stories of parallel brands, cigars that share the same names but are made in separate countries

By Gregory Mottola (/author/gregory-mottola) | From Animal House, January/February 2018 (/issue/january-february-2018)

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Photo/Jeff Harris

Part of the learning curve for newcomers to the cigar world is that even while they've diligently memorized names of classic Cuban cigars, when they see those brands displayed on a store shelf in the United States they are quite different animals made in a different location.

For almost every Cuban Montecristo cigar (/brand/montecristo), there's a counterpart that was made in the Dominican Republic (/brand/montecristo-non-cuban). A doppelganger of sorts. For every Partagás made in Havana (/brand/partagas), there's a Partagás made on the next island over in Santiago (/brand/partagas-non-cuban). And for every cigar roller making Romeo y Julieta with Cuban tobacco (/brand/romeo-y-julieta), there's a roller making Romeos (/brand/romeo-y-julieta-non-cuban) with everything from Indonesian wrappers to Nicaraguan fillers. The Cubans are shipped all over the

world, except for the United States, where the non-Cubans are sold. These parallel brands exist because of the 1962 trade embargo outlawing Cuban cigars in the United States and—for the most part—because brand owners who had seen their companies nationalized by the Cuban Revolution felt they should have the right to their trademarks.

When Fidel Castro nationalized the cigar industry in 1961, the owners of each major cigar brand fled Cuba and started over elsewhere. More than a decade later a landmark legal decision (*Menendez vs. Faber, Coe and Gregg*) granted the original Cuban owners the right to sell non-Cuban versions of the brands they had lost in the U.S. But there were two major stipulations. First, the cigars couldn't use Cuban tobacco anymore, because of the embargo. Second, parallel brands could only be sold in the United States.

Most of the popular U.S. cigar trademarks today are in the hands of major corporations. They were acquired through a series of negotiations, acquisitions and mergers. If anything, the story of the parallel brands is an interesting study of trademark law and how it applies to countries under a trade embargo—and each parallel brand does indeed have a story. Here are the histories of the major Cuban brands whose trademark names would eventually be reborn as mirror brands in the United States.



(<https://img.mshanken.com/d/cao/bolt/2018-03/brand-names-2.jpg>)

A Cuban Montecristo No. 2 (top) next to a Dominican Montecristo Classic No. 2 Torpedo (bottom).

Montecristo

That fact that Montecristo is one of the foremost names in cigars—even nonsmokers know the name—dates back to the expertise of Alonso Menendez. A Spaniard with knowledge of tobacco, he made his name when he purchased Cuba's Particulares factory in the 1930s. In 1935, he created Montecristo and an unforgettable logo to go with it: six rapiers forming a triangle and a fleur de lis in the middle (a motif still used today). The next year, Menendez picked up a partner, José Manuel "Pepe" Garcia, and formed Menendez, Garcia y Cia. The high-volume sales of Montecristo cigars allowed the company to acquire the H. Upmann factory (as well as the then-troubled brand). In just 20 years, Montecristo was an internationally recognized label.

Forced to turn it all over to the Castro regime after the Revolution, Menendez and Garcia became interested in creating and selling non-Cuban versions of Montecristo. They started with Montecruz, a spinoff of Montecristo brand made in the Canary Islands. Their newly formed company was called Compañia Insular Tabacalera S.A. (CIT). Montecruz contained no Cuban tobacco, but resembled Montecristos in both price and packaging. In a sense, Menendez and Garcia were copying themselves in almost every way, short of saying "Montecristo" on the box. However, in March 1972, Menendez fought in U.S. courts for the U.S. rights to the Montecristo name, taking on Faber, Coe and Gregg, the biggest importers of Cuban cigars into the United States, in *Menendez vs. Faber, Coe and Gregg Inc.* Menendez won. The case not only granted Menendez and Garcia the trademark rights to sell cigars under the Montecristo name in the United States, it also set a legal precedent for Cuban expatriates who had had their brands confiscated by the Castro regime.

The same year, Consolidated Cigar Corp. (at the time owned by Gulf + Western) decided that it wanted in. The large corporation bought a controlling interest in CIT. To better protect the trademarks, Consolidated and Garcia created a Netherlands Antilles company called Cuban Cigar Brands N.V. By 1975, the trademark was secured, but it would take a few years for the first non-Cuban Montecristos to reach the United States. They were made in the Canary Islands, then in the Dominican Republic.

By 2000, a series of mergers left Consolidated Cigar in the hands of Altadis U.S.A. (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/company/altadis-u-s-a-inc>) Today, major resources are spent by Altadis to develop and promote its flagship Montecristo brand in the United States. A dozen versions of the non-Cuban Montecristo now exist. A few versions are made in Nicaragua, but most are produced in the Dominican Republic.

H. Upmann

The creation and trajectory of H. Upmann (/brand/h-upmann) is very similar to that of Montecristo, as they were eventually rolled in the same factory and owned by the same company before the Revolution.

H. Upmann was created in 1844 by banker and financier Hermann Upmann. The story goes that Upmann had the cigars made for preferred clients in what was intended to be a side project rather than a major business. Nevertheless, by the turn of the century, H. Upmann cigars became enormously popular, being made in more than 200 different sizes and selling some 25 million cigars per year—and sales were growing. That is, until 1922.

While America was experiencing its age of prosperity—and consuming a good portion of H. Upmann cigars—Upmann's bank in Cuba went insolvent. The brand and factory ended up under the ownership of the English company J. Frankau & Co. Ltd. before the brand was finally rescued by Menendez, Garcia y Cia., which was seeing tremendous success with its Montecristo brand. It bought H. Upmann and moved production of Montecristo from the original Particulares factory to the expansive H. Upmann factory.

The commercial success of Montecristo allowed Menendez and Garcia to bring H. Upmann back to life and to reestablish it as one of Cuba's preeminent brands before it became property of the Cuban government.

Subsequent to the Cuban nationalization of the cigar industry, Mendendez and Garcia successfully registered the H. Upmann trademark, along with Montecristo, for U.S. distribution. They produced H. Upmanns in the Canary Islands before selling the rights to Consolidated Cigar, which began to sell non-Cuban H. Upmanns in the U.S. in 1975. Consolidated eventually became part of Altadis U.S.A., which now makes H. Upmann cigars (/brand/h-upmann-non-cuban) in both Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

SCRIPT COPYWRIGHT

Romeo y Julieta Vintage

5 Full-Flavored Shapes for Today's Connoisseur



(<https://img.mshanken.com/d/cao/bolt/2018-03/brand-names-1-1100.jpg>)

A photo from an old brochure promoting the Romeo y Julieta Vintage line. It was made by Manuel Quesada for Holco Rohr in the 1990s.

Romeo Y Julieta

Founded in Cuba in 1875 by Inocencio Alvarez and José "Manin" Garcia, the Romeo y Julieta brand would not thrive until it was taken over by Rodriguez, Arguelles y Cia. One of the principals, José Rodriguez Fernandez, was especially driven to expand the brand. Known as Don Pepin, he aggressively promoted internationally. By 1910, the factory was producing more than 20 million cigars annually, most of which were going to the United States and England.

Don Pepin never saw Castro's Revolution or the nationalization of his brands. His son, on the other hand, experienced the full brunt of Castro's takeover. Stripped of his brand and company, Rodriguez fled to the U.S. where he met Wally Frank, owner of cigar distributor Hollco Rohr Inc.

"Mr. Frank was keeping the Romeo trademark alive in the U.S.A. for Mr. Rodriguez by making a few RyJs in our Kingston, New York, machine-made factory and selling them in interstate commerce," says Brad Weinfeld, who was vice president of Hollco Rohr in the 1970s. Every year, Frank offered to buy the Romeo trademark, but, like many of the Cuban exiles, Rodriguez believed that Cuba would be opening up again soon, so every year, he declined.

"When Rodriguez passed in 1976, Mr. Frank went to Spain to meet with his widow and purchased the five trademarks. Romeo, Saint Luis Rey, Juan Lopez, Gispert and Quintero," says Weinfeld.

In 1978, Manuel "Manolo" Quesada (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/articles/manuel-quesada-the-gentleman-of-cigars-7731>) began to make the first handmade non-Cuban Romeo y Julietas at his MATASA factory in the Dominican Republic (a few were previously made by machine for interstate commerce to keep the U.S. trademark alive). The blend was typical of the time—Cameroon wrapper with Dominican filler. Quesada produced Romeos in small quantities until Hollco Rohr was acquired by tobacco giant Tabacalera S.A., in 1997. Two years later, Tabacalera merged with SEITA to form the mega-cigar company Altadis. Romeo y Julieta production was taken away from MATASA and moved to Tabacalera de Garcia, Altadis's massive cigar factory in La Romana, Dominican Republic. It now comes in myriad varieties (made in both Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic) and today is the best-selling premium brand for Altadis.

Hoyo De Monterrey

Hoyo de Monterrey (</brand/hoyo-de-monterrey>) was named after a hole—a very special hole. The Hole of Monterrey—or Basin of Monterrey, if you want a more romantic translation—refers to a fertile plantation bought by tobacco grower José Gener in 1860. Located on a river's edge in the Vuelta Abajo region of Cuba, it periodically flooded and collected sand and vegetal matter, which made for a fine, silky soil and remarkable tobacco. In 1865, Gener registered the Hoyo de Monterrey trademark. The brand's cigars were said to contain tobacco from that magical lot.

Gener died in 1900 and the business was taken over by his daughter. In 1931, she sold the Hoyo and La Escepcion brands to Fernandez, Palicio y Cia., a partnership between Ramon Fernandez and Fernando Palicio. (It is not clear if they bought the Hoyo de Monterrey farm or had access to its tobacco.)

After the Revolution, Palicio found himself in Tampa, Florida where he sold the Hoyo trademark to Daniel Blumenthal, chairman of Villazon & Co. By 1965, Hoyos were being produced in Honduras by Frank Llana at the Villazon factory.

"Up to that point, [Palicio] hadn't wanted to sell Hoyo de Monterrey because every day he had thought they were going back to Cuba tomorrow," said Blumenthal in an interview with *Cigar Aficionado* before his death (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/articles/dan-blumenthal-6117>). "But he called me, and I went down to see him in Hialeah where we made a deal on Hoyo and Punch."

Palicio sold his brands for almost \$700,000. The first batches of Honduran-made Hoyos were blended with Cuban tobacco. Villazon had amassed a large amount of Cuban leaf before the embargo and blended it into the Hoyo brand up until the 1970s when the Cuban stocks finally ran out. It couldn't legally advertise the tobacco's origin on the boxes or anywhere else, but the blend spoke for itself and the brand took off almost immediately.

In 1997, General Cigar Co. purchased Villazon for \$81.4 million and with it, the Hoyo de Monterrey brand. Today, the brand is still owned by General and offered in many varieties (</brand/hoyo-de-monterrey-non-cuban>), most of which are made in Honduras.



(<https://img.mshanken.com/d/cao/bolt/2018-03/brand-names-3.jpg>)

A Cuban Partagás (top) next to one of the non-Cuban versions (bottom), which is rolled in the Dominican Republic.

Partagás

Once the crown jewel of the premium Havana cigar trade, Partagás cigars were one of the most sought after smokes to come out of Cuba and perhaps the most highly regarded. Partagás & Co. was founded in 1845 by Jaime Partagás, a Spaniard once dubbed the "grandmaster of tobacco confection."

After 50 years of operation, the company had amassed more medals of distinction from more expositions around the world than any other cigar brand at the time. What made the company unique was its lock on some of the most precious soil in Cuba's Vuelta Abajo region. Partagás owned the plantations—nearly 30,000 acres—and was able to supply his factory with an almost unlimited source of prime leaf.

In the 1860s, Jaime Partagás was shot to death in one of his own tobacco fields. Thirty-two years later, the family sold the factory to banker José A. Bances, who then sold it to Ramon Cifuentes and José Fernandez of Cifuentes, Fernandez & Co.

On September 15, 1960, Cuban soldiers stormed the factory under orders of Fidel Castro. Cifuentes described the events of that day to Marvin R. Shanken, editor and publisher of *Cigar Aficionado*, in a 1991 interview (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/articles/death-of-a-legend-7259>).

"They took over the factory. They came inside, and said we're here to [take over] the company. And they didn't allow me to take anything from there," said Cifuentes. The titanic brand of Partagás was nationalized, along with its precious plantations. In a strange twist, the government made Cifuentes an offer. They asked him to stay in Cuba and run all of Cuba's factories. "They asked me to stay," he said in 1991 "I said no." He left Havana for the United States a few days later.

Instead of working for Castro, Cifuentes got a job working for Edgar Cullman Sr., president of Culbro Corp., at the time the parent company of General Cigar Co. For 10 years, Cullman offered to buy the Partagás trademark, but Cifuentes nursed the same dream of many displaced Cubans—that he'd soon be returning to his motherland, repatriated and ready to resume business.

Once Cifuentes accepted reality, he relented. In 1975, the Cifuentes family made a deal with General and the U.S. saw its first non-Cuban Partagas cigars in 1977.

"I heard two different stories about the contract," said Benji Menendez (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/articles/an-interview-with-benjamin-menendez-15452>), who made Montecristos and H. Upmanns for his father, Alonso, in Cuba before expatriating to the U.S. "One version said that Cifuentes got a certain amount of money for production and also on the sale of each cigar like a royalty. The other version said that it was an outright purchase. I'm not sure which one was true, but General owns it now." It turns out both were true. Initially, it was not an outright purchase and a royalty was paid, but after a period of time General bought Cifuentes out.

Either way, who better to make the new Partagas cigar than Ramón Cifuentes himself? They were first produced in Jamaica under the supervision of Cifuentes and later in the Dominican Republic with Menendez. Together they helped to acclimate the U.S. to a new type of Partagas, one made in the Dominican Republic with Cameroon wrappers and Dominican fillers. (Unlike the Cuban version, the non-Cuban Partagas does not carry an accent in its brand name.) Partagas remains a major brand for General today, and along with the original style that bears a Cameroon wrapper, there are several other newer varieties.

Punch

Facts behind the Punch brand (/brand/punch) are a bit nebulous. It was registered in 1840 by someone named Stockman and named after the traditional Punch and Judy puppet shows. Ownership changed a few times before 1884 when Punch was owned by Manuel Lopez Fernandez. (The name Manuel Lopez appeared on Punch labels for quite some time, even after the Revolution.) After the stock market crashed in 1929, Punch was acquired by Fernandez, Palicio y Cia., makers of Hoyo de Monterrey and La Escepcion.

Over time, Punch cigars gained a large customer base in England based on the country's appetite for Cuban cigars and cultural appreciation for the Punch puppet character. Succumbing to the inevitable, Fernando Palicio fled to the U.S. after Cuba's mass nationalization, bringing with him the U.S. rights to the Punch trademark. He grudgingly sold the Punch trademark (along with Hoyo de Monterrey, see above) to Llanea and Blumenthal of Villazon, who registered the Punch brand in 1965.

Like Hoyo de Monterrey, Punches were briefly made in Tampa before production was moved to Honduras. The cigars were originally made with both Cuban and Honduran tobacco. The Cuban leaf was slowly phased out over the course of a few years, but Punch gained a following in the United States among fans of stronger cigars. In 1997, General Cigar acquired Villazon, and with it, the Punch brand. Today General makes most of its Punch cigars (/brand/punch-non-cuban) in Honduras.

La Gloria Cubana

First registered in 1885, the La Gloria Cubana brand had little recognition before 1905 when José F. Rocha & Co. purchased it. Rocha also owned the Bolivar brand. In 1954, following Jose Rocha's death, his family sold La Glona and Bolivar to the Cifuentes family and production was moved to the Partagás factory under the supervision of Ramon Cifuentes. His operation came to a halt on September 15, 1960 when Castro's soldiers marched into the factory and seized the firm as well as its assets.

In the shadow of Partagás and even Bolivar was the small La Gloria Cubana brand. According to Ernesto Perez-Carrillo, his father bought the rights to La Gloria in Cuba when he owned the El Credito factory (which he bought in 1948), though he never produced La Gloria Cubana brand cigars until coming to the U.S.

By the 1960s, Perez-Carrillo's father reopened the El Credito factory in Miami. He started producing La Glorias on a very limited basis in 1974. "It wasn't until the 1980s that I started using all the original Cuban art to help market the cigars," says Perez-Carrillo about the brand his father brought to America. The Miami-made boutique cigars gained a local following at first but a high rating for its Wavell in this magazine gave La Gloria Cubana its boost to national fame. To meet demand, Perez-Carrillo moved production to the Dominican Republic in 1996. The brand's growth got the attention of General Cigar, which purchased La Gloria in 1999. Today, the cigars are made in the General Cigar Dominicana factory (/brand/la-gloria-cubana-non-cuban) and have an extremely loyal U.S. following.

Bolivar

Founded by José Fernandez Rocha in the early 1900s, Bolivars (/brand/bolivar) were produced and sold under his company J.F. Rocha y Cia. The British tobacco merchants Walters & Co. bankrolled the factory and also distributed the brand in England. This accounts for England and Europe being its primary market. By 1920, Bolivar made inroads in the U.S. thanks to distributor A. J. Billin & Co., though not very much is known about this company.

A portrait of the revolutionary Simón Bolivar appeared on the box, but the bands were much more understated, showing a gilded crest. That changed after Rocha's death. In 1954, his family sold the brand to Cifuentes y Cia, known for their strong Partagás brand. No stranger to producing powerful

smokes, Cifuentes produced some full-bodied Bolívars in its Partagás factory. At the same time, the bands were changed from a generic crest to include the Bolívar portrait.

Bolívars were enjoying consistent popularity in the years leading up to the Revolution. When Ramón Cifuentes came to the U.S., he worked for General Cigar and eventually sold the Bolívar trademark to General, which registered it in 1983. By the mid '90s, General was making just enough Bolívars to keep the trademark alive, but not enough for full commercial production. Then, in the late '90s, it made a Bolívar in the Dominican Republic, followed by a stronger version in Honduras. By 2005, General created a new core Bolívar brand blended to be powerful and earthy. Despite the brand's rich history, Bolívar lagged on the U.S. market. In 2015, it was announced that Bolívar would be folded (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/articles/bolivar-and-ramon-allones-folded-into-foundry-portfolio-18296>) into its now defunct subsidiary called the Foundry Tobacco Co. Bolívar was rebled, repackaged and remarketed. General still owns the trademark.

Cohiba

No cigar brand in the world has as much fanfare, controversy or mystique as Cohiba (/brand/cohiba). The cigar was created in Cuba in 1966 (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/articles/50-years-of-cohiba-18681>) for Fidel Castro, who ruled Cuba at the time. Diplomats and dignitaries in Castro's good graces got one—maybe even an entire case—as a gift. Cohiba came in one size, a long, thin lancero. Old photos of Castro often show him pontificating with a long, slender cigar in his mouth. Chances are, it was a Cohiba.

After the cigar had become mythic, Castro decided to share Cohiba with the rest of the world. They went on sale in 1982, in Spain, and sales were soon expanded on a global basis.

While the original Cohiba band was dull and brown, it quickly morphed into one of the most recognizable cigar bands in the world, with unmistakable branding: yellow and black, a grid of white dots, bold-font lettering, a Taino Indian head. Over time, the label has evolved and is now full of gold embossments and holographic elements meant to thwart counterfeiters.

The story behind Cohiba's Dominican-made U.S. counterpart differs from the rest of the parallel brands (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/article/cohiba-v-cohiba-19142>). Unlike most popular Cuban brands, Cohiba was created after the Revolution by the Castro government, so it was never seized from anyone. The disgruntled expatriates may have sought to reproduce their own family labels for the U.S. market, but they left Cohiba alone. Cohiba was not representative of their tobacco heritage, it was a symbol of the new regime. In the U.S., it belonged to no one.

General Cigar filed an application with the U.S. Patent and Trademark office in 1978 for the Cohiba mark. It was officially registered in 1981 and General began selling Dominican-made Cohibas in the U.S. in 1994. By 1997 General created what is known as the "red dot" Cohiba, with a logo featuring a red dot in the hole of the "O," quite a different look from Cuba's cigar. General didn't buy the trademark from anyone and felt they didn't have to. The Cuban government was outraged.

In response, Cuba sued over trademark infringement in January 1997. The case is officially known as *Empresa Cubana del Tabaco v. Culbro Corp.*, and Cohiba has been in litigation ever since. For 20 years the suit has gone back and forth in a legal tug-of-war with wins and losses for both sides, not to mention millions of dollars spent on legal fees.

The case is presently tied up with the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB), which has yet to rehear it. Cuba still seeks to halt the sale of Cohibas in the U.S., and is demanding financial restitution. General claims that the embargo prevents the Cuban government from any trademark rights in the United States.

In the meantime, more than a half-dozen versions of Cohiba are made by General Cigar for the United States (/brand/cohiba-non-cuban), and Cuba continues to come out with new varieties, including a 50th anniversary version (<https://www.cigaraficionado.com/articles/cohibas-night-18649>) created in 2016. The case of Cohiba v. Cohiba is still unresolved, with neither party backing down.

Trinidad

Like Cohiba, Trinidad cigars (/brand/trinidad) were not commercially available when they were created in the 1960s. They were reserved only for use as diplomatic gifts for visiting dignitaries. Boxes of these cigars have gone for dear prices at auction.

The first commercial Trinidads were sold in 1997, and they began as a single size called Fundadores. By the early 2000s, Cuba expanded the Trinidad line, adding three more sizes. The brand was small, but the mystique and allure was undeniable.

And it didn't seem to have any political baggage either. Cuba always maintained that Trinidad was a post-Revolution brand and therefore, had no nagging business ties to the past nor any legal standing to be marketed in the United States. Not everyone agreed. Diego Trinidad Jr. certainly didn't. He claimed his family did business under the Trinidad name well before Castro came to power.

Trinidad y Hermanos was founded by Diego Trinidad in 1905 as a tobacco company. Diego Trinidad Jr. took over the family business in 1920, incorporating in 1958 and renaming it TTT Trinidad. The business was confiscated a few years later.

Disenfranchised by the Revolution, the Trinidad family relocated to the U.S. and started Trinidad Tobacco Trading Corp. The Trinidads were looking for someone to produce their cigars and, in 1968, they found that someone in Tampa—the Fuentes. The Arturo Fuente factory made a line of Trinidad cigars for the Trinidad family out of its Tampa factory and did so up until the late 1970s. Production ceased after the Fuentes left Tampa, but in 1997, Fuente started making the Trinidads again, this time in the Dominican Republic.

The non-Cuban Trinidads came in two sizes, a Corona and Robusto and were made with a Cameroon wrapper. The rest of the tobacco was Dominican.

A legal battle ensued when the Trinidad family challenged the Cuban's ownership of the U.S. trademark. According to the Patent and Trademark Office, the U.S. trademark for "TTT Trinidad La Habana, Cuba," issued to Empresa Cubana in 1996, was based on the same Cuban trademark registered in 1958 by Trinidad y Hermano and was transferred to the Cuban government after the Revolution. This gave the Trinidad family a legal argument and a fighting chance.

"Our cigars are in the market with the exact replica of everything that [the Cuban version] has, which was ours to begin with," said Trinidad Jr. in 1997. "Let's see what they do about it."

In 2001, the Trinidad family won the trademark case and was granted the right to sell Trinidad cigars in the United States.

By 2002, a full line of Trinidads hit the U.S. market, but the Fuentes had not made them. That same year, Altadis U.S.A., purchased the brand from the Trinidad family and subsequently produced Trinidads in the Dominican Republic. Altadis U.S.A. remains the current U.S. trademark holder for Trinidad cigars.

Naturally, the entire narrative and existence of parallel brands leads to one question: what happens when the embargo ends? Will Cuban and non-Cuban versions of Montecristo share shelf space? Now that parallel brands are deeply entrenched in the U.S. market, the notion of reintroducing Cubans raises entirely new legal conundrums of ownership, and distribution rights, not to mention competition law.

Legal battles are likely. So are long negotiations. As for the future of parallel brands, all anyone can do is speculate.

Altadis U.S.A. Inc. (/company/altadis-u-s-a-inc)

General Cigar Co. (/company/general-cigar-co)

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John Walsh • 2 years ago

I agree with the pre-revolution owners of the brands that the brands were theirs.

However in my opinion General should never have been allowed to use the name Cohiba on their inferior cigars.

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Alex Benes • 2 years ago • edited

Greg, If I remember correctly, the insolvency of the Upmann bank was tied directly to the aiding and abetting during WW1 of German spies transiting from Europe to Latin America with a stopover in Havana. As well, the Upmann's assisted in

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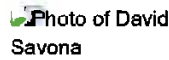
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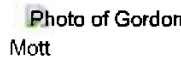
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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD**

In the matter of Trademark Registration No. 1147309

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: February 17, 1981

AND

In the matter of the Trademark Registration No. 1898273

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: June 6, 1995

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| ----- | X | |
| EMPRESA CUBANA DEL TABACO, d.b.a. | : | |
| CUBATABACO, | : | |
| | : | |
| Petitioner, | : | |
| | : | Cancellation No. 92025859 |
| v. | : | |
| | : | |
| GENERAL CIGAR CO., INC., | : | |
| | : | |
| Respondent. | : | |
| | : | |
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Steven Abbot – Annex U

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BRAND SIZES







Sizing Chart



Brand Reviews

Cigars

| Size | Offer | Pack | Bonus item offer | | Free shipping offer | |
|---|-------|---------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| | | | MSRP | Price | | |
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| | | Single | | | \$2.50 | ADD TO CART |
|  <p>Robusto Maduro</p> | | Box of 40 | 29% off | \$100.00 | \$70.99 | BACKORDER |



5 x 50 - Maduro Robusto



by 12 customers

Bundle of 20

SALE - 30% off
(ends 10/31)~~\$40.00~~**\$27.95****ADD TO CART**

Single

\$2.50**ADD TO CART****Toro**

6 x 50 - Natural Toro



by 9 customers

Box of 40

SALE - 33% off
(ends 10/31)~~\$116.00~~**\$77.95****ADD TO CART**

Bundle of 20

SALE - 30% off
(ends 10/31)~~\$40.00~~**\$27.95****BACKORDER****Toro Maduro**

6 x 50 - Maduro Toro



by 6 customers

Box of 40

SALE - 33% off
(ends 10/31)~~\$116.00~~**\$77.95****ADD TO CART**

Bundle of 20

SALE - 30% off
(ends 10/31)~~\$40.00~~**\$27.95****ADD TO CART**

Single

\$2.90**ADD TO CART****Other Brands By Ventura Cigar**

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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD**

In the matter of Trademark Registration No. 1147309

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: February 17, 1981

AND

In the matter of the Trademark Registration No. 1898273

For the mark COHIBA

Date registered: June 6, 1995

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| ----- | X | |
| EMPRESA CUBANA DEL TABACO, d.b.a. | : | |
| CUBATABACO, | : | |
| | : | |
| Petitioner, | : | |
| | : | Cancellation No. 92025859 |
| v. | : | |
| | : | |
| GENERAL CIGAR CO., INC., | : | |
| | : | |
| Respondent. | : | |
| | : | |
| ----- | X | |

Steven Abbot – Annex V



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Pedro Perez—Former President, Tabacalera

By Marvin R. Shanken (/author/show/id/210)

From Tom Selleck, Winter 95/96 (/issue/show/date/1995-12-01)

A talk with the man behind Tabacalera, Spain's \$7 billion tobacco company.

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(continued from page 5)

CA: Incentives for the workers?

Perez: For the workers. Both for the farmers and for the workers in the factories. For instance, this year the mechanism is the following: You have an incentive in dollars, if the farmer surpasses the program. This year, for instance, 38 percent of the farmers are receiving incentives.

CA: Is there any chance of getting more involved such as actually owning farms or doing the farming yourself?

Perez: This is not the target. Our target is to secure that in three years the production of leaf tobacco and cigars doubles.

CA: So you're hoping that your 27 million cigars in three years increases to 54 million? You would be very happy! You didn't really respond to the question of your future with General Cigar.

Perez: Well, the deal is still pending.

CA: I assume that one of the great benefits to General Cigar, and to you as an owner of General Cigar, is that instead of taking two to three years to negotiate who owns the Cuban brands, after the embargo is lifted, you can basically press a button, get two jets and fly them up and you're in the Cuban cigar business in America before anybody else. Particularly when it's a brand that they already own, that you have the worldwide rights to. Right? Like Partagas. You could be first!

Perez: Yes. If our Cuban friends share this strategy, we could be in a position to offer our American partner a direct and rapid way of introducing a brand like Partagas to the U.S..

CA: Besides Partagas, what other brands do you own?

Perez: General Cigar also owns Ramon Allones, Cifuentes and Cohiba for the U.S. markets.

CA: There is a question with Cohiba. General only owns the name Cohiba but not the logo art? Who else owns it?

Perez: The Cubans.

CA: This would give General Cigar a huge advantage when the embargo is lifted, particularly if the embargo isn't lifted for three or four years, which gives you enough time to build an inventory and warehouse an inventory so that when it happens, you not only have the legal issue resolved, you have the inventory in place. What this may mean is almost withdrawing Partagas from the Spanish market, most of it, anyway; I mean, if you put away 2 to 3 million each year...

Perez: We could...

CA: The deal is still pending, or let's say the deal doesn't happen, for whatever reason. When it was announced, it was announced only as an agreement in principle, subject to further negotiation and execution of a definitive agreement. But it essentially outlined a deal of 51 percent ownership for \$100 million. What was there—the brands, the distribution, the personnel at General Cigar—that caused you to agree to such a significant price?

Perez: It was not only a question of brands. Of course, as you know, the portfolio of Consolidated is larger than in the case of General Cigar, because they have Montecristo, and others. No, the elements we considered very attractive in the case of General Cigar were, first of all, its position in the market as the leader in the premium segment; in connection with this, its excellent distribution and promotion system; and also, leaving aside the premium element, the efficiency in the machine-made cigars and the efficiency and quality in the handmade cigars. In analyzing all the aspects of the company, we considered General Cigar very attractive. At the same time, its size, which is smaller than Consolidated, was again a positive element for us.

CA: Consolidated was just sold a few years ago. I assume it was sold before the time that you were actively looking, because had it not been, you probably would have considered its acquisition as a possibility. Do you see yourself making further investments in America to build the General Cigar operation? Will there be other brand acquisitions?

Perez: Our strategy at present is to be associated with General Cigar; this is the main target. The 51 percent stake is something. The principal idea is to get an association between Culbro and Tabacalera in order to manage General Cigar and to exploit all the potential that Culbro and Tabacalera can generate together. If this project finally is successful, I think that we may be limited to further expansion because of antitrust legislation.

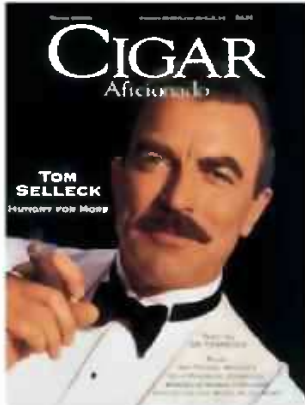
CA: But that doesn't stop you from product-line extensions or new brands, if you have access to Cuban leaf—to come out with the Pedro Perez Selection, for instance. You can grow internally, limited only by your own supply of tobacco. Isn't that right?

Perez: To grow internally is a goal in any company, but as to the possibility of increasing the size of the project by incorporating other companies, the problem in my view is a legal one with regards to the antitrust laws in America.

CA: What are your thoughts about the future of the premium cigar market, not only in Spain and Cuba, but in the rest of the world?

Perez: I think that the cigar industry is in a great period of recovery. It is perhaps the only segment in the whole tobacco industry with such a recovery. This is a fact in the United States; it's also a fact in Europe. I see a clear future for this particular part of the industry. Premium handmade cigars are the key to sustaining any recovery in the tobacco business. More and more people will continue to discover the pleasure of fine handmade cigars. And once the consumer is enjoying this product, he or she is going to be tempted to taste and try not only the handmade cigars but the whole range of cigar products.

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 2 (/webfeatures/show/id/Interview-Pedro-Perez_6133/p/2) 3 (/webfeatures/show/id/Interview-Pedro-Perez_6133/p/3)
 4 (/webfeatures/show/id/Interview-Pedro-Perez_6133/p/4) 5 (/webfeatures/show/id/Interview-Pedro-Perez_6133/p/5) 6 ()



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MAJOR BUSINESS NEWS

'Cohiba' Name Ruled Close But No Cigar

An Interactive Journal News Roundup

Updated Dec. 23, 1997 12:01 a.m. ET

The rights to the name of Cuban dictator Fidel Castro's favorite cigar are at stake in lawsuits pitting two U.S. companies and a Cuban manufacturer against one another.

"An expensive cigar is a symbol of influence, sophistication and power, a gift of heads of state, which has found an increasing popularity with new, young and affluent smokers," U.S. District Judge Robert W. Sweet said Friday. He then granted a preliminary injunction preventing an American company from using the "Cohiba" label on its cigars.

Judge Sweet's ruling prevents Global Direct Marketing from selling its cigars with the Cohiba label because General Cigar Co. Inc. already holds the U.S. copyright for the name.

While the two American companies both use the Cohiba name, the Cuban firm that originated the label and continues to make them maintains its has the sole trademark right to the brand name.

The Cuban company, Empresa Cubana del Tabaco, also known as Cubatabaco, has accused General Cigar in federal court of violating its trademark.

Judge Sweet has yet to rule whether the Cuban company can register its trademark in the United States and nullify the existing trademark, belonging to General Cigar.

However, General Cigar said Monday the trademark litigation begun by Cubatabaco has been suspended to allow the parties to discuss a possible settlement.

Cubatabaco exports its own Cohiba cigars but they cannot be sold in the U.S. because of a trade embargo against Cuba. The Cuban company has registered its trademark for Cohiba in 115 other countries.

General Cigar said it expects to meet with Cubatabaco in late January.

General Cigar's former parent company, Culbro, adopted the name in late 1977 as a new trademark for one of its premium brand cigars. It was the name of a personal brand of cigar smoked by Mr. Castro, the company believed.

The market for cigars in general declined from 1972 until 1992 by as much as 3% to 6% a year, the judge wrote. At about the same time General Cigar put its Cohiba cigars in new packaging in the early 1990s, the cigar market took off. In the last four years, sales have risen eight fold.

In May, GDM began importing its Cohiba cigars from the Dominican Republic.

General Cigar, based in Bloomfield, Conn., filed a lawsuit Oct. 21 after finding its cigar, also made in the Dominican Republic, was being confused on the shelves with the GDM product, which Judge Sweet found was of lower quality.

In its defense, GDM gave the court copies of internal notes from General Cigar showing it knows that Cohiba cigars are a brand which Mr. Castro uses.

But Judge Sweet swept aside the arguments, finding General Cigar's copyright valid.

Judge Sweet described GDM, based in New York, as an upstart company that has tried to defend its use of the Cohiba name by asserting the trademark rights of Mr. Castro.

"Those who rely on the reputation of Castro's cigar to protect themselves from infringement actions will find their arguments going up in smoke," the judge wrote.

He also noted there was so much confusion in the marketplace about the cigars that Neiman Marcus had called to ask why General Cigar's exclusively marketed Cohiba cigars were appearing in so many retail shops.

He ordered GDM to stop using the name and to recall all cigars which GDM has distributed or sold which carry the Cohiba name.

Charles H. Knull, a lawyer for GDM, said he would not appeal the ruling. But he said the company would get to argue the issues again when General Cigar seeks a permanent injunction.

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Brand Awareness

By David Savona (/author/show/id/7)

From 10th Anniversary Issue, Nov/Dec 02 (/issue/show/date/2002-12-01)

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So how is it that for almost every classic Cuban brand, a cigar made outside of Cuba shares its name? In most cases, it happened because a cigarmaker left Cuba after his company was confiscated and felt he still had the right to his cigar's name.

Most of Cuba's ciarmakers fled their island in the early 1960s and many began making cigars right away in adopted homes such as the Canary Islands and Miami. But it wasn't until the 1970s and later that the non-Cuban versions of such cigar stars as Partagás, H. Upmann, Montecristo and others began to be sold in the United States.

Most of the owners thought their exile from Cuba would be a short one and that they would soon be back making their old cigar brands, so there was no rush for them to create non-Cuban versions of their products. Many early cigar brands created by Cuban exiles were new names, such as Don Diego, or lookalikes of Cuban names, such as Montecruz. As the years passed, owners sold their brands to raise money.

The first major brand to get a non-Cuban version was Hoyo de Monterrey, which hit the market in 1965. The brand owner, Fernando Palicio, sold Hoyo and the Punch brand on his deathbed to Frank Llaneza and Dan Blumenthal of Villazon & Co.

The 1972 lawsuit Menendez v. Faber, Coe and Gregg—the latter an importer of Cuban cigars—was the landmark case that established the right of the cigarmakers in exile to market their versions of the brands they used to make in Cuba. The lawsuit led to the creation of Cuban Cigar Brands NV, which owned the trademarks H. Upmann, Montecristo and Por Larrañaga. The 1970s saw the creation of the non-Cuban Partagas and H. Upmann brands. In 1990, Consolidated Cigar Corp. began making Montecristos for the American market.

The Dominican Cohiba is an exception to the scenario whereby emigrants who escaped communism sold the rights to brand names they had once owned. The Cuban Cohiba was created and named in 1966, seven years after the revolution. General Cigar Co. applied to register the U.S. rights to Cohiba in 1978 and began selling Dominican Cohibas in 1980.

It always seemed that a major battle would be fought over the U.S. rights to Cuba's brand names when and if the embargo was lifted. General Cigar and Cuba are set to meet in court soon to settle the ownership of the Cohiba brand, and some dispute may arise over the U.S. rights to the other brands sold by General Cigar and Swedish Match AB, which include Partagas and La Gloria Cubana. But it appears that the U.S. rights to the Altadis U.S.A. Inc. brand portfolio will not be the source of future battles: the company, which makes and markets Montecristo, H. Upmann, Romeo y Julieta and Por Larrañaga cigars, is a unit of Altadis S.A., which owns half of Cuba's Habanos S.A. and is the largest customer by far of Cuba's cigar industry.



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U.S. Appeals Court Denies Cuba's Cohiba Case

By David Savona (/author/show/id/7)

Posted June 10, 2005

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A ruling this week could send the case for Cohiba all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

On June 6, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals issued an order denying Cubatabaco's motion to rehear its case. Cubatabaco, the owner of Cuba's cigar brands, was appealing the court's ruling that gave the U.S. rights to Cohiba to General Cigar Co. in February. Cubatabaco has until August 30 to file a further appeal, and its next step is to petition the U.S. Supreme Court.

"The court's unanimous opinion in General Cigar's favor was thorough, well-reasoned and conclusive. We feel confident that the Supreme Court will agree," said General's lawyer, Nick Simeonidis. Michael Krinsky, a New York attorney representing Cubatabaco, said, "The Supreme Court will decide what it wants to do."

General Cigar, a unit of Swedish Match AB, makes the "red dot" Cohiba in the Dominican Republic.

See Also:

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IPCPR Moves Show Dates And Venue (/webfeatures/show/id/ipcpr-moves-show-dates-and-venue-19155)

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A.J. Fernandez Opens New Factory, Producing 601 Brand (/webfeatures/show/id/aj-fernandez-opens-new-factory-producing-601-brand-19153)

Friday, December 23, 2016

Craig Reynolds To Head North American Business For Scandinavian Tobacco Group (/webfeatures/show/id/craig-reynolds-head-north-american-scandinavian-tobacco-group-19151)

Thursday, December 22, 2016

FDA Extends Cigar Registration Period By Six Months (/webfeatures/show/id/fda-extends-cigar-registration-period-by-six-months-19150)

Tuesday, December 20, 2016

San Cristobal Quintessence Now in Stores Nationwide (/webfeatures/show/id/san-cristobal-quintessence-now-in-stores-nationwide-19148)

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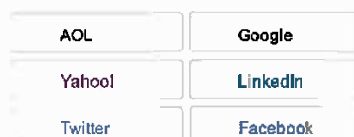
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U.S. Appeals Court Denies Cuba's Cohiba Case

By David Savona

Posted June 10, 2005



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A ruling this week could send the case for Cohiba all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

On June 6, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals issued an order denying Cubatabaco's motion to rehear its case. Cubatabaco, the owner of Cuba's cigar brands, was appealing the court's ruling that gave the U.S. rights to Cohiba to General Cigar Co. in February. Cubatabaco has until August 30 to file a further appeal, and its next step is to petition the U.S. Supreme Court.

"The court's unanimous opinion in General Cigar's favor was thorough, well-reasoned and conclusive. We feel confident that the Supreme Court will agree," said General's lawyer, Nick Simeonidis. Michael Krinsky, a New York attorney representing Cubatabaco, said, "The Supreme Court will decide what it wants to do."

General Cigar, a unit of Swedish Match AB, makes the "red dot" Cohiba in the Dominican Republic.



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Supreme Court Finds for General Cigar

By Michael Moretti (/author/show/id/348)

Posted June 19, 2006

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Today, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld General Cigar Co.'s right to sell its Cohiba brand cigars by denying Cubatabaco's appeal for trademark ownership in the United States.

"Today's ruling affirms what we have believed all along," Gerry Roerty, vice president and general counsel of General Cigar, said in a statement. "Cubatabaco had no standing to challenge General Cigar's ownership of the Cohiba mark in the United States."

The courtroom tug-of-war between the two companies had lasted since 1997, when Cubatabaco, a Cuban state-run company, first sued General Cigar, now a subsidiary of Swedish Match. In March 2004, a U.S. district court in New York rejected General's claims (/Cigar/CA_Daily/CA_Daily_News/0,2342,951,00.html) and ordered the recall (/Cigar/CA_Daily/CA_Daily_News/0,2342,964,00.html) of its Cohibas from retailer shelves. The recall never happened, and in February 2005, the court of appeals in New York overturned the verdict (/Cigar/CA_Daily/CA_Daily_News/0,2342,1036,00.html), finding Cubatabaco's ownership rights were negated in the United States under legal precedents established in the U.S. embargo against Cuba. Cubatabaco had appealed the 2005 decision (/Cigar/CA_Features/CA_Feature_Basic_Template/0,2344,1297,00.html) twice before it was sent to the Supreme Court.

Despite today's judgment, Cubatabaco is not ready to give up the fight. It responded in a statement, saying it "would now pursue its pending application for U.S. government permission from the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, which administers the U.S. blockade.... In seeking U.S. government permission, Cubatabaco will emphasize the United States' international obligations to protect 'well-known' trademarks, such as Cohiba, under the Paris Convention for Protection of Industrial Property."

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Federal Judge Overturns Cohiba Case — Again

By Gregory Mottola (/author/show/id/393)

Posted December 3, 2008

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The Cohiba trademark case that refuses to die has just taken another turn. Although the trademark dispute over the Cohiba brand name was dismissed in 2005, allowing General Cigar Co. to continue using the Cohiba mark in the United States, the case was reopened, and it was just overturned in light of a new legal precedent.

Cubatabaco, the arm of the Cuban government that owns Cuba's cigar trademarks, had appealed to the United States District Court, Southern District of New York, citing a prior Court of Appeals ruling (*ITC v. Punchgini*) as a basis for its claim against General Cigar, the producers of the Dominican Cohiba cigar sold in the United States. After reviewing *Empresaa Cubana Del Tabaco v. Culbro Corp.* (Culbro being the former owner of General Cigar), Judge Robert W. Sweet determined on November 18 that General Cigar was guilty of unfair trade by misappropriation. Furthermore, Sweet ruled that Cubatabaco was entitled to relief.

General Cigar's spokesperson said company officials were not available to comment. General is a subsidiary of Swedish Match AB.

The litigation goes back 11 years since General Cigar began marketing products with the Cohiba name in 1997. Cubatabaco has attempted to block General's use of the brand name ever since, and won the first round of legal battles in 2004. But when General appealed in 2005, the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the U.S. embargo on Cuban goods precluded Cubatabaco from claiming any benefit of the Cohiba brand name. It was also determined that Cubatabaco had failed to establish "bad faith," an element needed to make the claim of unfair trade by misappropriation.

Cubatabaco argued that a 2007 ruling in *ITC v. Punchgini* eliminated the "bad faith" requirement as being integral to the claim of misappropriation. Judge Sweet agreed.

Cubatabaco is requesting relief that includes General's profits on sales of Cohiba cigars.

For much more on this story, see next Tuesday's *Cigar Insider* (/Cigar/CA_Insider/CA_Insider_Main/1,3045,00.html).

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It looked like Cuba's 11-year legal attempt to block General Cigar Company from using the name "Cohiba" for cigars it sells in the U.S. had been put to bed a few years ago when the trademark case was dismissed on appeal. The apparent victor, Virginia-based General Cigar Co. But the battle that refuses to die has flared up once again. Cubatabaco, which owns the rights everywhere except the U.S., moved to reopen and reverse the 2005 judgment, citing a separate ruling that entitled Cubatabaco to relief for unfair trade by appropriation, but had been overturned on appeal. Now, the same New York State appellate judge agreed, and has ruled in favor of Cubatabaco with a new legal argument for that overruling.

Now, Cubatabaco, is expected to ask the judge to enjoin General Cigar Co. from continuing to use the name Cohiba and move for a disgorgement of profits.

In the world of Cuban cigar trademark battles, Cohiba has always stood apart on its own—it was the first "new" brand created in Cuba after the Castro regime's nationalization of the island's privately-owned cigar factories, so it never fit the mold of the brand's former rightful owners establishing ownership elsewhere. But it was the U.S.-based General Cigar Co. that applied for and was granted—unopposed—the U.S. trademark for the brand in 1981. It's been selling the brand, made in the Dominican Republic, commercially since 1997.

The lead lawyer for General Cigar said the company "strongly disagrees" with the judge's ruling and will appeal.





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Cohiba v. Cohiba—Cubans Win New Ruling

By David Savona (/author/show/id/7)

Posted December 17, 2009

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The legal battle over the Cohiba name, a fight that has gone on longer than the Second World War, took on new life this week when Judge Robert W. Sweet of the Second District Court of New York ruled in favor of the Cuban cigar industry. The judge issued an injunction for General Cigar Co. to stop selling its Cohiba cigars in the United States and said that: "General Cigar selected Cohiba for a new product [in the early 1990s] in order to exploit the reputation and goodwill of the Cuban Cohiba" in the United States, and that General "continues to profit from the Cuban Cohiba's goodwill."

General intends to appeal. It has the right to continue to sell Dominican Cohiba cigars in the United States until the appeal is decided.

"Judge Sweet's decision fully vindicates the fundamental principle that a company cannot be permitted to reap what it has not sowed, that it cannot be permitted to exploit the goodwill and reputation of another company's product," said Michael Krinsky and David Goldstein, the U.S. attorneys for Cubatabaco, the state-run Havana entity that owns Cuba's cigar brands.

"We strongly disagree with the order issued by the District Courts on December 14, 2009, in the Cohiba matter. We intend to vigorously appeal this matter," said Dan Carr, chief operating officer of General Cigar, in a statement emailed to *Cigar Aficionado* last night. "The Second Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court previously ruled in favor of General Cigar when it found General Cigar is the only true holder of valid trademark rights to Cohiba in the United States of America. Until this matter is ultimately decided on appeal, we will continue to supply our retailers and sell General Cigar's Cohiba products to our valued customers in the United States of America."

Rulings have gone back and forth between the Cuban cigar industry and Richmond, Virginia's General Cigar Co. over the past dozen years. Cubatabaco sued General in 1997 regarding the Cohiba mark, trying to cancel General's trademark in the United States. On March 26, 2004, an American judge cancelled General's trademark of Cohiba, ruling in favor of Cubatabaco. General appealed, and continued to sell the cigars, which have a band featuring a red dot. They look quite unlike the Cohibas made in Cuba, which have black, gold and white bands. In February 2005, General won its appeal.

In 2008, the case was reopened in light of a new legal precedent—Cubatabaco appealed to the United States District Court, Southern District of New York, citing a prior ruling as a basis for its claim against General.

Judge Sweet has yet to rule on Cubatabaco's claim to recover the profits General Cigar has made on sales of Cohiba over the years.

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Cigarworld Announcement

Banner Headline: General Cigar Celebrates Victory in Cohiba Trademark Case

Text: July 14, 2010--A federal appeals court has ruled in favor of General Cigar in the latest round of litigation in the US Cohiba trademark case, once again affirming that the company is the rightful owner of the Cohiba trademark in the U.S. The appeals court concluded that Cubatabaco's argument that a change in a law justified re-opening this case was "without merit" and restored a previous ruling in favor of General Cigar over Cubatabaco.

According to Dan Carr, chief operating officer of General Cigar, "We are pleased with the court's ruling and continue to remain confident that our exclusive right to the Cohiba cigar brand in the U.S. will be upheld even if Cubatabaco attempts further legal efforts to challenge these rights. We are committed to vigorously defending our U.S. rights to the Cohiba mark."

General Cigar first filed a U.S. application to register the Cohiba trademark in 1978.

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Favorable Ruling for General Cigar in Cohiba Trademark Case

CIGAR NEWS • 1 JUL 2010

GARY KORB

The appeals court concluded that Cuban-government-owned Cubatabaco's argument that a change in a law justified re-opening this case was "without merit" and restored the U.S. Court of Appeals' ruling in 2005 in favor of General Cigar over Cubatabaco.

In various court opinions beginning in late 2008 and into early 2010, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York ruled that there were changes to New York State Unfair Competition law that provided Cubatabaco the basis

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to re-open this case.

Yesterday's Appeals Court decision overturned the lower court's rulings.

Cubatabaco first filed suit against General Cigar in 1997, claiming rights to the Cohiba name in the United States under U.S. law, although Cubatabaco had failed to take any legal action against General Cigar for nearly 20 years.

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GARY KORB



**EXECUTIVE EDITOR
AT
CIGARADVISOR.COM**

Gary Korb has been writing and editing content for CigarAdvisor.com since its debut in 2008. An avid cigar smoker for over 30 years, during the past 12 years he has worked on the marketing side of the premium cigar business as a Sr. Copywriter, blogger, and cigar reviewer. A graduate of the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University, prior to his career in the cigar business, Gary worked in the music and video industry as a marketer and a publicist.

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A Cohiba by Any Other Name

CIGAR NEWS • 23 JUL 2010

JOHN PULLO

A 14-year legal odyssey has seen Cubatabaco, the Cuban state tobacco monopoly, desperately trying to protect its Cohiba brand in the coveted U.S. marketplace. A recent ruling, however, found in favor of [General Cigar](#), now a subsidiary of Swedish Match.

For decades (and even longer, in some cases), Cuban cigars were created under well-known names such as Montecristo, Cohiba, Romeo y Julieta, and others. However, Cubatabaco failed to trademark its brand names in the United States, where sales of its product were effectively illegalized by the Embargo of 1962.

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[General Cigar](#) began marketing cigars under the “Cohiba” name in 1978. Its [Cameroon](#)-wrapped “red dot” Cohiba cigars bowed in 1997, earning serious praise and a cult-like following.

But that’s just one brand. Nearly every Cuban brand name has a Dominican-, Honduran-, or Nicaraguan-made counterpart marketed to American cigar smokers, for whom Cuban cigars remain illegal (even abroad).

To further complicate matters, one of General Cigar’s biggest competitors, Altadis, acquired in 2000 a 50% stake in Habanos S.A., the promotion, distribution, and export arm of Cubatabaco. Altadis currently manufactures the non-Cuban Montecristo and Romeo y Julieta, meaning the deal granted Cubatabaco some modicum of control over these Cubancigar brands stateside.

All that raises a two-part question:

1. Will we see an end to the Embargo any time soon?
 - Judging by Cubatabaco’s

actions, it would seem

THEY hope so.

2. If/When the Embargo DOES

end, what does that mean

for all these so-called

"Cuban Exile" brands?

Further Reading:

- [2nd Circ. Restores General Cigar Win in Cohiba Suit](#)
- [Altadis on Wikipedia](#)
- [Habanos SA on Wikipedia](#)

JOHN PULLO



**MANAGING EDITOR
AT
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This is not his picture,
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Close, But No Cigar: Cohiba Battles with US General Over Fabled Brand

Posted April 3, 2013 by [Mark J. Miller](#)



It's been in the hands of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro and now it's in the hands of a slew of lawyers. The Cuban Cohiba, considered for decades to be the nation's best cigar and a symbol of high-end swank the world over, has been spending a fair amount of time in court over the last 16 years.

In that time, the issue has been between the General Cigar Co. and Cubatabaco, the Cuban state tobacco company. The pair have been battling over the cigar's trademark in the United States. Recently, the U.S. Trademark and Appeal Board dismissed Cubatabaco's petition that was trying to keep General from using the cohiba name in the United States, *Cigar Aficionado* reports.

That General won the latest round did not sit well with folks in Cuba, where the *Havana Times* headlined its story about the case with "Cuba's Cohiba Trademark Theft Gets OK."

There are, of course, two different cohibas.[more]

[What's the problem with trademarks?](#), [The trademark wars](#), [The trademark wars](#)

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The frosty U.S.-Cuban relationship certainly hasn't helped Cubatabaca's chances toward winning a court fight since their product is unavailable in America.

"The TTAB ruled that because the federal courts have held that Cubatabaco may not sell Cohiba cigars in the U.S. or acquire any interest in the Cohiba mark, Cubatabaco lacks any property interest in the Cohiba mark," a press release said.

Cubatabaco's legal team wouldn't talk to *Cigar Aficionado* about the most recent defeat. "This ruling once again affirms what we have believed all along: That Cubatabaco has no merit in challenging General's ownership of the Cohiba trademark in the United States," General's president Dan Carr told the publication.

Perhaps there is no merit to the challenge, but it still leaves serious cigar smokers who want a taste of the Cuban variety needing to buy a plane ticket in order to get a whiff of the cohiba that Cubatabaca says is the real thing.



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term of the day:

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See also: cigars, trademark, general cigar company

GENERAL CIGAR PREVAILS OVER CUBATABACO IN TRADEMARK DISPUTE

March 28, 2013

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GENERAL CIGAR PREVAILS OVER CUBATABACO IN TRADEMARK DISPUTE

General Cigar Company

Richmond, VA—General Cigar was recently vindicated by the courts again in the nearly 16 year old legal battle waged by Cubatabaco to determine rightful ownership of the Cohiba® trademark in the United States. After losing its legal battle in the Second Circuit, Cubatabaco continued to exhaust all available legal channels by bringing this matter before the United States Trademark Trial and Appeal Board ("TTAB").

The TTAB granted General Cigar's motion for summary judgment, and dismissed with prejudice Cubatabaco's petition to cancel General Cigar's Cohiba registrations. The TTAB ruled that because the federal courts have held that Cubatabaco may not sell Cohiba cigars in the U.S. or acquire any interest in the Cohiba mark, Cubatabaco lacks any property interest in the Cohiba mark. Cubatabaco therefore has no standing to challenge General Cigar's registrations of the Cohiba mark.

General Cigar's President Dan Carr said, "This ruling once again affirms what we have believed all along. That Cubatabaco has no merit in challenging General Cigar's ownership of the Cohiba trademark in the United States."

General Cigar received its first registration of the Cohiba trademark in the U.S. in 1981 and again in 1992. The company has sold its Dominican Cohiba cigar in the U.S. since the early 1980s.

About Cohiba Cigars

True cigar connoisseurs recognize Dominican Cohiba cigars as one of the finest brands available in the U.S. market. Critically acclaimed for their meticulous construction and refined taste, the core brand of Cohiba cigars is complemented by these premium collections: Cohiba Black, Cohiba XV, Cohiba Puro Dominicana and Cohiba Edición Diamante.

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Jay-Z and Cohiba Partner to Release Comador

By G. Clay Whittaker (/author/show/id/478)

Posted December 24, 2013

1/1

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The biggest names in hip-hop and cigars have teamed up to release a special-edition smoke in a unique partnership. General Cigar Co. has announced Cohiba Comador, a collaboration with Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter.

Jay-Z—our June 2009 *Cigar Aficionado* (/webfeatures/show/id/Cover-The-Music-Mogul_6238) cover star—released a statement saying, "I worked with Cohiba because I knew they'd take my vision of a luxury cigar and bring it to life in the right way. We took our time working on this, to get the blend to exactly where I wanted it to be. Comador looks and tastes the way I think a cigar should."

The wrapper leaf is a Connecticut Havana leaf grown in the United States and, according to General Cigar, aged for four years and finished in Dominican barrels. General Cigar isn't releasing details on the binder and filler tobaccos, except to say that they're Caribbean and Central American in origin.

Comador comes in just one size: a 6 inch by 52 ring gauge toro. It is, however, available in several packaging options- a seven-cigar "toro box" for \$210, a travel humidor with seven cigars retailing for \$350, and the Comador Humidor, which comes with both a travel humidor with 7 cigars and an additional 14 cigars within the larger package (see photo).

The packages are available online at comadorcigar.com as well as in several New York retailers and multiple Barneys locations.

Cohiba cigars were first created in Cuba in the late 1960s after that country's revolution and the Cuban version has never been legally sold in America due to the U.S. embargo on Cuba. General Cigar registered the trademark in the U.S. in 1981 and has been selling a Dominican-made version of Cohiba since the 1980s. The companies have actually been battling since 1997 over who rightfully owns the trademark in the U.S., with Cubatabaco—the Cuban manufacturer of Cohiba products—continuing to lose each claim in court.

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Bruce Parrish Westminster, MD, USA, December 24, 2013 10:35am ET

\$30 a stick ?? Since I'm not a poser, I'll pass.

ken@1strateins.com December 24, 2013 12:40pm ET

I would pay the \$30/stick if they promised me that Beyoncé rolled them on her thighs.

Richard Robbins Ramona, CA, USA, December 24, 2013 12:42pm ET

I smoked one of these at a General Cigar Cocktail party in Vegas, and I must say its the best cigar I've had from the Dominican Cohiba line. If you get the chance to pick one you should.

Kenneth E. Elliott North Bergen, NJ, United States, December 24, 2013 12:44pm ET

I, too am "not feeling" it.

Steven Flaherty Houston, Tx, Us, December 24, 2013 1:07pm ET

Poser is right.

Robert Cardona Keller, Texas, December 24, 2013 1:48pm ET

I much rather spend that kind of dough on a real cigar like a Padron Family Reserve 85. Forget Jay Z it's all about Jose O Padron baby!

Doug Wiggins Bowie, MD, December 24, 2013 2:08pm ET

He should've called it "The Hoviba", then maybe I'd buy a couple boxes...

Phillip Butler Timonium, MD, US, December 24, 2013 4:33pm ET

I would expect the haters to show up on msnbc posts or some other such trash, but not here. You don't have to buy it. This space should be for cigar lovers, not people haters. I am no lover of jay z or Beyoncé, but this site is about the cigars, not the gossip columns.

scott flores pomona, California, United States, December 24, 2013 5:33pm ET

Man that seems expensive as hell!Cohibas are overrated.i would try one,if I could just buy one.

mike williams Jr December 24, 2013 5:47pm ET

Y.O.L.O my birth day coming up I'm going to try it. i like cohiba anyway

Terrence Davis Henderson, Nevada, USA, December 24, 2013 9:14pm ET

Touche, this site is about Cigars. But think about it...when has Jay Z put out something and it was really not worth it. Not Good At All???

JOSEPH AMLIN TABANAN, INDONESIA, December 25, 2013 1:27am ET

All. This is an excellent cigar I had one in Vegas at the Big Smoke and another today as part of my xmas celebration in Bali. I have a great collection of delicious smokes Cubans and non-cubans. The Comador compares to the best of the best. The draw is easy, the smoke is full and cool with the flavors starting with coffee and chocolate with a bit more peppery spice at the end). The cigar is well balanced and joy not only to smoke but also look at with it's dark brown smooth wrapper. I enjoyed the 2nd cigar as much as the first. I'm also impressed with the packaging and am looking forward to adding my Comador humidor next to my other great cigars. Tip of the hat to CG! I expect to see this cigar in the 2014 top 25 list. Merry xmas to all!

JOSEPH AMLIN TABANAN, INDONESIA, December 25, 2013 2:46am ET

Sorry for the type above should read - "Tip of the hat to General Cigar (GC)" not CG.

Renwick Howard Oxon Hill, MD, USA, December 25, 2013 10:26am ET

If you like it, support it. If not, don't. JAY Z bashing aside, I'm curious to know how many of you have met the people whose names are associated with your favorite brands?? Merry Christmas "aficionados" and enjoy the holidays.

Shawn Poteet Winona, Minnesota, USA, December 25, 2013 7:22pm ET

I hate being a critic or "hater" but WHY would someone pay \$30 for a "Cohiba" when they can buy a REAL Cohiba (Cuban) for the same price OR cheaper!?! I'm just sayin...

James Anderson Upper Marlboro, Maryland, United States, December 25, 2013 10:28pm ET

I agree with Doug Wiggins that would have been a good name for his cigar. Price is steep, but I also said I wouldn't pay for anniversary Padron's but I do and it's a great cigar. I keep some in the humi, actually I wish he would have done it with Padron instead. But Joseph Amlin speaks highly, I shall give it a try.

Kevin McNeill Los Angeles, CA, USA, December 27, 2013 1:16am ET

I smoked this cigar at General Cigar's event in Vegas...didn't know it was JayZ'. That bit of info was kept secret. I had already had 2 cigars so my palet wasn't clean when I smoked it...it was very very good! I must admit I was impressed. Medium to full and very flavorful. Great draw n burn...I was able to get a 3inch ash on it before the ash fell. General Cigars even took a pic of me with the long ash.

Although I agree \$30 is a bit steep, I would purchase it again because it's an extremely one of a kind...it's own finger print...cigar...can't compare the flavor profile to anything else I've smoked.

Ramesh Narinesingh Harrisburg, Pa, USA, December 27, 2013 11:04am ET

I agree with Cardona...smoked a nice 80 year Padron on Christmas day! JZ has to earn my doe! Hasn't spent enough time in this game!

Erik Molnar Yakima, WA, USA, December 29, 2013 3:10pm ET

@Renwick Howard...I have actually met Jonathan Drew of Drew Estate a couple of times at cigar events. Very down to earth guy who genuinely cares about his customers and his product. Personally I'll buy a \$8 Undercrown before I'd buy a \$30 Cohiba but to each his/her own.

工内三下三L_MCMLXXI™ January 21, 2014 12:30am ET

Had the pleasure of puffing one of these this weekend while in Vegas have to say one of the best so far from Dominican Cohiba (post pic on twitter) #salute

charles sturdlvant uniondale, ny, usa, March 21, 2014 11:54am ET

I wood like to try one - But at \$30 it better be good.

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Cohiba vs. Cohiba—General Wins Another Round

By Gregory Mottola (/author/show/id/393)

Posted March 28, 2013

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General Cigar Co. has just won another battle in the contentious trademark war over the Cohiba brand.

After a nearly 16 year legal feud, the Cohiba case went before the United States Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB) on March 14. According to a press release issued by General Cigar, Cubatabaco (owner of the Cuban Cohiba trademark) petitioned the TTAB to cancel General's use of the Cohiba brand name in the United States. The petition was dismissed.

"The TTAB ruled that because the federal courts have held that Cubatabaco may not sell Cohiba cigars in the U.S. or acquire any interest in the Cohiba mark, Cubatabaco lacks any property interest in the Cohiba mark," the press release said.

The dismissal is another blow for Cubatabaco, which lost a previous judgment handed down by a Manhattan appeals court in 2010 (/webfeatures/show/id/3941). "This ruling once again affirms what we have believed all along: That Cubatabaco has no merit in challenging General's ownership of the Cohiba trademark in the United States," said General's president Dan Carr.

Cigar Aficionado spoke briefly to Cubatabaco's legal team and to Cuban cigar distributor Habanos S.A. for further remarks, but both declined comment.

Cohiba cigars were first created in Cuba after that country's revolution and the Cuban version has never been legally sold in the United States due to the U.S. embargo on Cuba. General Cigar registered the trademark in the U.S. in 1981 and has been selling a Dominican-made version of Cohiba since the 1980s. The litigation started in 1997, however, when General Cigar began nationally marketing products with the Cohiba name. Cubatabaco and General Cigar have been embroiled in the fight over Cohiba ever since.

This is a developing story. Look for more coverage at www.cigaraficionado.com.

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18 Comment(S) ▼

Dan Leptitpede March 28, 2013 4:15pm ET

Who cares! Cuban Cohiba will always be > DR Cohiba!

Eric Schwenk March 28, 2013 8:04pm ET

Dan, you couldn't be more on point about that. Cuban Cohibas are the most sought-after cigars in the world, while Dominican Cohibas are an average but overpriced knock-off. They charge \$15-20 for many of their cigars when you can get an Opus X or Padron Anniversario for the same price or less (or a Cuban Cohiba, for that matter, if you find the right source). The litigation shouldn't hurt the Cubans because anyone who knows what he's doing would not mistake the Dominican for the Cuban version.

hang_ing_chad@hotmail.com March 28, 2013 10:56pm ET

It WAS a bit "cheesey" of General, jacking this brand name. But, whachagonnado? In the U.S., there is no real clash because both versions of the brand are not on the open market. I can see how there would be a problem in markets where both versions of product exist. Btw, are there any countries that sell both kinds of same-name brands: Cohiba, La Gloria Cubana, Partagas, Por Larranaga, Punch, San Cristobal, etc., etc.?

David Dodd Ashfield, NSW, Australia, March 29, 2013 2:01am ET

It would be too much to expect a US cigar company to act honorably over such a thing as this. Their target domestic market is the uninformed and overseas where both brands might be available, you can rest assured the US tourist buyer is looking for the real Cuban, not the cheesy knock-off.

frenk.kaljeila@gmail.com March 29, 2013 3:57am ET

This ruling will only have a real consequence for Cubatabaco when the embargo is lifted. However, that would drastically change the grounds of the ruling, that "that Cubatabaco may not sell Cohiba cigars in the U.S. or acquire any interest in the Cohiba mark."

What happens then? Does General Cigar still get to keep the trademark?

Kevin Shah Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia, March 29, 2013 4:09am ET

The story will continue when the embargo lifts. And I hope this time the real Cohiba will win. I mean, why can't General choose a different name instead of riding off the glory of the Cohiba name? Guess they lack creativity in their marketing department.

Crenshaw Dubois Bartow, FL, United States, March 29, 2013 8:02am ET

If Cubatabacco really wants to badly possess a U.S. Trademark, then can the Castro regime and return that country into a constitutional republic. Furthermore, Cuba, how does it feel for someone else to steal a piece of property you think you own? Apparently, this wasn't a problem with the Castro communist regime when it nationalizing thousands of private companies when it took over the country in 1959. One good turn deserves another.

Float Dub March 29, 2013 5:00pm ET

Crenshaw nailed it.

To hell with Cuba and its regime. And shame on CA for glorifying it for 20 years.

Cohiba is the second most counterfeited brand in the world after Louis Vuitton. I can't tell you how many times I've seen clowns with knock offs they got on their trip to the Caribbean or on their cruise say "this is the best smoke ever" as if they had a palate to know the difference.

If it's fake then that is money you could have spent on a cigar most likely made by someone forced to abandon their homeland and sold by an American businessman.

If you actually happen to get a real one then you are knowingly supporting a murderous dictatorship. Fools.

John Law Philadelphia, PA, USA, March 29, 2013 11:52pm ET

While it is ironic seeing the Cuban govt suing over a copyright, I find it funny people are so self righteous in condemning people who enjoy Cuban cigars. While the Castro regime is brutal, what about all the other brutal regimes we buy goods from, namely China. And as far as Cuba returning to a constitutional republic, that's something that's hardly existed. It's not as if the Batista gov't that Castro overthrew was a legit, democratic regime.

Shad Bates Torrington, Wyoming, USA, March 30, 2013 12:36am ET

Nothing beats a Cuban Cohiba - personal favorite is Siglo III, followed closely by Robusto and then Siglo II. I smoke them, enjoy them and support only my desire to smoke more, not a murderous regime. And you know what? I shed not one tear while lighting one up!

Keep up the good work CA - supporting cigar smokers worldwide by providing meaningful, insightful and thorough coverage of all cigars.

Oh, one more thing - Float and Crenshaw, you need to be sure to stay away from all things made in China since you're denouncing anything that comes out of a county controlled by a 'murderous dictatorship.' Everyone hold hands and sing Kumbaya.....

Christian April 1, 2013 4:27pm ET

Now I'm no fancy NY lawyer but it seems to me that General Cigar will be busier than a centipede at a toe countin' contest when the embargo lifts and their crap smokes will stand next to Cuban Cohibas. I say this going to cause the people more confusion than a mouse in a burlesque show.

Alexandre De Faveri Botucatu, SP, Brazil, April 2, 2013 4:32pm ET

Hey, let's talk about "murderous countries" here, starting by the USA and all nonsense wars You were in...

About non Cuban cigars, these american companies, like this one above and Altadis, who counterfeit cuban brands like Cohiba, Montecristo, H.Upmann and othes jusk make me laugh. It's like I start producing Jack Daniel's here in Brazil. Is it gonna be the same stuff???? Noooo.

The only fooled ones in this story are the americans. Ohhh, I'm smoking a Montecristo made outside of Cuba. Hmmmmm, delicious!

Rudi de Groot CALGARY, AB, CANADA, April 2, 2013 6:11pm ET

Wow, this is a great thread!

Good new also for all those Cohiba shops in California! They can keep on plagiarizing the Cuban branding, selling Cohiba shirts with the Habanos SA wordmark on them :/

Ed Thesled April 2, 2013 6:23pm ET

How about this? Why doesn't General Cigar offer to stop using "Cohiba" if Cubatabaco/Habanos S.A. stops using all of the trademarks (and plantations, and factories, and equipment) that they stole back in 1961 from the real owners back in -- you, know, like Montecristo, Romeo y Julieta, Bolivar, Partagas, Punch, etc., etc., etc.

Dan Leroux Laval, Quebec, Canada, April 2, 2013 11:08pm ET

General Cigar's is to Habanos SA what a Lada is to a Fiat, a poor man's copy at best. I always keep a few cheap machine made Macanudo or General Cigar's in my humidor and hand them out gladly to posers that come to my place. It's a great show, second to share with friends a few Partagas Culebras which is a decent smoke. Everybody look silly smoking a culebras,

It's a shame that CG can continue selling their garbage under the legendary Cohiba name. It's like putting a Rolls Royce sign on a Ford Fiesta and pretending it's refined!

Brian Auerbach Oakland, CA, USA, April 3, 2013 11:48am ET

Anti Castro fervor does not a trademark case make. The Cuban Cohiba trademark, as were many other Cuban cigar trademarks, was "lifted" in the spirit of anti-Castroism. General would not stand for the same if directed toward it. Just because you disagree with a government, doesn't mean you steal with impunity.

One thing is for sure: the DR Cohiba will never come close in quality to the Cuban Cohiba. At least we have that.

One more thing: CA does a very balanced job of coverage on Cuba. I generally don't like its overall slant--overt consumerism for the 1%, etc., but I have always been impressed by the coverage of Cuba. Keep it up Marvin. Maybe you get the first interview with the new president!

Timothy Hodge Aliquippa, PA, USA, April 3, 2013 12:08pm ET

Very shady ethics on behalf of General Cigar. I'm ashamed to admit that as a cigar noob, I knew nothing of this before reading this article. I fell right into General Cigar's trap by assuming the Cohiba AND Partagas lines were related those produced in Cuba. Shame on me!

Steve Bowman April 4, 2013 8:31pm ET

Other than Cohiba, which is a legitimately owned Cuban brand everywhere but the US, those Cuban brands (Punch, Partagas, etc.) were purchased from the rightful pre-revolution owners by General Cigar or a predecessor company.

Fidel "liberated" those brands for the benefit of his socialist state with no compensation to the rightful owners.

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Stogie Guys Friday Sampler No. 329

As we have since July 2006, each Friday we'll post a mixed bag of quick cigar news and other items of interest. Below is our latest [Friday Sampler](#).

1) The U.S. Trademark Trial & Appeal Board (TTAB) has declined Cubatabaco's petition to cancel General Cigar's trademark of the Cohiba brand. This is the latest victory for General Cigar in its 16-year-old legal battle with Cuba's state-owned tobacco monopoly. At issue is whether the longstanding Cuban embargo enables American companies to sell non-Cuban cigars with Cuban brand names. "This ruling once again affirms what we have believed all along. That Cubatabaco has no merit in challenging General Cigar's ownership of the Cohiba trademark in the United States," said Dan Carr, president of General Cigar. We previously summarized some of the trademark battles being waged as a result of the Cuban embargo [here](#).

2) Gov. Mike Beebe signed House Bill 1531 into law on Tuesday, effectively capping the Arkansas excise tax on cigars at 50 cents per cigar. "Arkansas becomes the ninth state to cap its ad valorem tax rate on cigars, joining Connecticut, Iowa, Michigan, New Hampshire, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin," according to the International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers Association.

3) *Inside the Industry*: Crowned Heads has been working on the "J.D. Howard Reserve" since October (the blend was finalized in early February) but the new cigar won't make its debut until the industry trade show in Las Vegas this summer. The cigar will be available in 5 vitolas: HR46 (6 x 46), HR48 (5 x 48), HR50 (5.6 x 50 figurado), HR52 (6 x 52), and HR54 (5 x 54).

4) *Around the Blogs*: [Stogie Review](#) reviews an Inception, [Half Wheel](#) fires up an OpusX Football, [Cigar Inspector](#) inspects an H. Upmann Legacy, [Stogie Fresh](#) smokes the RoMa Craft Tobac Intemperance EC XVIII, [Cigar Fan](#) lights up the Trinidad Paradox.

5) *Deal of the Week*: Normally \$65, this [La Gloria Cubana deal](#) features six La Gloria cigars and a dual flame torch lighter for \$40.

[The Stogie Guys](#)



photo credit: [General Cigar](#)

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QUESTION OF THE MONTH

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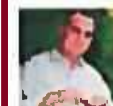
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General Cigar Prevails over Cubatabaco in Trademark Dispute.

Benzinga.com

March 28, 2013

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Length: 448 words

Body

Byline: Business Wire

RICHMOND, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

General Cigar was recently vindicated by the courts again in the nearly 16 year old legal battle waged by Cubatabaco to determine rightful ownership of the Cohiba(R) trademark in the United States. After losing its legal battle in the Second Circuit, Cubatabaco continued to exhaust all available legal channels by bringing this matter before the United States Trademark Trial and Appeal Board ("TTAB").

The TTAB granted General Cigar's motion for summary judgment, and dismissed with prejudice Cubatabaco's petition to cancel General Cigar's Cohiba registrations. The TTAB ruled that because the federal courts have held that Cubatabaco may not sell Cohiba cigars in the U.S. or acquire any interest in the Cohiba mark, Cubatabaco lacks any property interest in the Cohiba mark. Cubatabaco therefore has no standing to challenge General Cigar's registrations of the Cohiba mark.

General Cigar's President Dan Carr said, "This ruling once again affirms what we have believed all along: That Cubatabaco has no merit in challenging General Cigar's ownership of the Cohiba trademark in the United States."

General Cigar received its first registration of the Cohiba trademark in the U.S. in 1981, and again in 1992. The company has sold its Dominican Cohiba cigar in the U.S. since the early 1980s.

About Cohiba Cigars

True cigar connoisseurs recognize Dominican Cohiba cigars as one of the finest brands available in the U.S. market. Critically acclaimed for their meticulous construction and refined taste, the core brand of Cohiba cigars is complemented by these premium collections: Cohiba Black, Cohiba Puro Dominicana and Cohiba XV.

General Cigar Co. Inc., a division of Scandinavian Tobacco Group, manufactures and markets handcrafted cigars for the premium market. Committed to delivering cigars of the finest quality, General Cigar's skilled artisans produce Macanudo(R), Cohiba, Partagas(R), La Gloria Cubana(R), Punch(R), CAO, Hoyo de Monterrey(R), Excalibur(R) and several other leading premium brands in the company's Dominican, Honduran and Nicaraguan factories. In addition, the company cultivates proprietary tobacco which is used exclusively in its blends. General Cigar also operates Club Macanudo(R), a cigar bar in New York City. Based in Richmond, VA, General Cigar sells through tobacconists nationwide and also exports select products to 62 countries. For more information, please visit www.cigarworld.com.

(R) Cohiba, Macanudo, Partagas, La Gloria Cubana, Punch, Hoyo de Monterrey, Excalibur, and Club Macanudo are registered trademarks of General Cigar Company.

General Cigar Co.

General Cigar Prevails over Cubatabaco in Trademark Dispute.

Victoria McKee, 732-721-0317

vmckee@gcigar.com

Load-Date: March 30, 2013

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Cuban cigars could become a hand-rolled headache

The Times (London)

June 22, 2009 Monday, Edition 1, National Edition

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THE TIMES

Section: BUSINESS; Pg. 43

Length: 618 words

Byline: Christine Seib

Body

When John F. Kennedy banned Cuban cigars in 1962 as part of the American trade embargo of the communist island, he sent out his press secretary to stock up on 1,000 to ensure that his personal supply was well supplied.

Forty-seven years later, as his successor begins to relax the blockade, tobacco companies are lining up to fight for the rights to cigars not sold or owned legally in the States since JFK's stash ran out.

Gordon Mott, the executive editor of Cigar Afficionado magazine, said that his readers were watching President Obama's overtures to Cuba with interest. "If the trade embargo is lifted, anyone who's a cigar connoisseur in this country will know about it," he said.

American smokers could soon have the chance to buy Cuban. In April Mr Obama lifted prohibitions so that Cuban-Americans could travel to and from the island and send clothes, agricultural goods and pharmaceuticals to relatives there. Charles Rangel, the Democratic chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, which monitors the Government's rules on trade, predicted last month that all restrictions related to Cuba would disappear by the end of next year.

Yet, as a result of the blockade, brands such as Cohiba, La Gloria Cubana, Hoyo de Monterrey, Partagás, Sancho Panza and Punch have two owners. Ignacio Sánchez, a lobbyist with DLA Piper who works with General Cigar, told Congressional Quarterly: "The lifting of the embargo would potentially create turmoil over who owns those rights."

When Fidel Castro nationalised Cuban cigar manufacturers in the 1960s, many of the families who owned the companies fled overseas. In the United States, some of the families sold their cigar brands to General Cigar, a company owned by Swedish Match. Swedish Match sells cigars made under these brands, but with tobacco cultivated in Honduras and the Dominican Republic. The company claims 30 per cent of the premium market in the US.

Meanwhile, Cubatabaco, the Cuban tobacco monopoly, manufactures cigars under many of these brands. In 1994 the country set up Corporación Habanos to sell cigars to the rest of the world through exclusive distribution agreements in each country. For example, Hunters & Frankau, a cigar importer, has the right to sell cigars produced by Corporación Habanos in Britain.

Imperial Tobacco owns half of Habanos through its purchase last year of Altadis, the Spanish tobacco company. To complicate matters further, other tobacco companies bought brands from expatriate families and General Cigar snaffled the Cohiba brand by registering it in the US and defeating Cuba in a nine-year legal battle.

Cuban cigars could become a hand-rolled headache

Lawyers expect an array of court cases in America when the market opens up, including an estimated \$2 billion (£1.2 billion) of claims filed by expatriates against Cuba for the seizure of their tobacco fields and other property.

Gerry Roerty, general counsel to Swedish Match, said that the company also feared that Cuba would not open up access to the Vuelta Abajo district, famed among cigar enthusiasts for a microclimate that produces tobacco with a flavour unlike any other, but instead would choose to have a single distributor or franchised stores in the US. Swedish Match has spent more than \$5 million on lobbying lawmakers on issues related to Cuban cigars.

Up in smoke

Americans buy about 270 million premium, or hand-rolled, cigars, every year

Annual sales estimates range from \$850 million to \$1.8 billion and the US is the biggest premium cigar market

It is illegal for an American to buy Cuban products. Experts guess that cigar lovers smuggle up to 20 million Cuban cigars into the US each year

A box of 25 Cuban Hoyo de Monterrey Churchills costs \$354 online, against \$72 for the Honduran version

Graphic

President Kennedy was fond of Cuban cigars, so much so that he ordered a big batch for his personal use even as he slapped a trade ban on the country - but now the import ban could be lifted

CECIL STOUGHTON / AP

Load-Date: June 23, 2009

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Tobacco appeal

The Times (London)

February 26, 2005, Saturday

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Section: Business; 55

Length: 75 words

Body

Cubatabaco, the Cuban Government tobacco company, will appeal against a federal court ruling that took away its right to the Cohiba cigar trademark in the United States. On Thursday, the US Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Cubatabaco could not hold the trademark because of the US embargo against Cuba. The court's ruling allows General Cigar Holdings, based in New York, to market cigars under the Cohiba name in the United States.

Load-Date: February 26, 2005

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Cohiba cigar suit snuffed out function

Daily News (NY)

February 25, 2005, Friday

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Length: 222 words

Byline: By Robert Gearty

Body

Makers of the cigar Fidel Castro made famous were fuming yesterday after an appeals court sent its trademark infringement lawsuit against a New York company up in smoke.

The 2nd Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that the Cuban company Cubatabaco does not have the exclusive naming rights to Cohiba in the United States.

The three-judge panel cited the 42-year-old Cuban embargo as reason for stubbing out Cubatabaco's stogie battle against New York-based General Cigar.

"It's been a long, expensive battle to beat them," said General Cigar lawyer John Kirby after the court declared the company owner of the Cohiba mark in the U.S.

Cubatabaco sued in 1997 when General Cigar came out with its own \$ 20 Cohiba, hand-rolled with tobacco from the Dominican Republic and the Cameroons. Officials from Cubatabaco, which is owned by the Cuban government, declined to comment on the legal setback.

But if it's any consolation, Cubatabaco's Cohiba -- made especially for Castro after the Cuban revolution -- is still considered the Cadillac of cigars for lovers of lighting up.

Cigar Aficionado magazine once compared the Cuban Cohiba to a "superb main course at a Michelin three-star restaurant."

To see more of the Daily News, or to subscribe to the newspaper, go to <http://www.NYDailyNews.com>.

Load-Date: March 1, 2005

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FAKE CIGARS GET ROLLED IN CUBA CASE

The New York Post
March 30, 2004 Tuesday

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Section: All Editions; Pg. 7

Length: 204 words

Byline: WILLIAM NEUMAN

Body

Capitalism has its advantages, comrade.

A federal judge in Manhattan yesterday said American trademark law protects Cuba's premium Cohiba brand of cigars and ordered a New York company to quit selling stogies under that name.

Cohibas were originally created in Cuba as the personal cigars of Fidel Castro and were later given as gifts to visiting heads of state and other dignitaries.

In 1982, Cuba began selling them internationally - but not in the United States, which has a trade embargo banning all goods from the communist island.


A decade later, the magazine Cigar Aficionado, in its premier issue, anointed Cohibas as one of the world's great cigars - and that's when a New York company called General Cigar started marketing a high-end stogie under the Cohiba label.

Made in the Dominican Republic, General Cigar's version of the Cohiba sells for between \$20, for a single 8 1/2-inch-long cigar, to \$7.35, for a 4-inch stogie.

Cubatabaco, the state-owned Cuban business that makes Cohiba, filed suit in 1997 to stop General from selling the cigars, and federal Judge Robert Sweet yesterday ruled that even though Cuban Cohibas aren't sold in the United States, the brand is famous enough that it deserves protection.

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OPINION

DON'T STOP HOARDING THOSE CUBAN CIGARS JUST YET

BY JACOB GRIER ON 1/12/15 AT 3:21 PM



Trademark law and the FDA may still stop us smoking fine Havanas.

ENRIQUE DE LA OSA /REUTERS

OPINION

CUBAN CIGARS

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

The announcement of more normal diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba is welcome news for many reasons. Americans will now have somewhat fewer restrictions on travel, business, and banking on the island, and they will be allowed to send higher remittances to family living there. In Cuba, the deal includes the release of

political prisoners and a promise of expanded Internet access.

Yet the one benefit that captures the imagination of many is the possibility that Cuba's most famous export, cigars, may finally become legally available in the United States.

If only it were that simple. Even in a best case diplomatic scenario, we're still a long way from finding Cuban cigar brands at our local tobacconists. Here are three obstacles to getting Cuban tobacco into the U.S.

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2. Trademark Battles Will Be Complicated

The United States is the world's largest market for premium cigars and our embargo with Cuba has essentially divided the global market in two: us and everybody else.

Our embargo has created dueling trademarks for cigars. Cuban brands such as Romeo y Julieta, Cohiba, Partagas, Hoya de Monterey, Bolivar and Punch are sold around the world. But since the United States does not recognize the Cuban trademarks, cigars of non-Cuban origin with identical brand names are sold here. (It should also be mentioned that the original owners of many of these brands had their assets seized by the Cuban government and had to rebuild their businesses in exile.)

Some of these dueling brands are linked through international subsidiaries, but others are in direct competition. The General Cigar Company owns many of these trademarks in the United States, and markets them domestically. A legal dispute over the General Cigar and Cuban claims on the Cohiba trademark has dragged on since 1997 and still has not been resolved.

(Rum enthusiasts will face similar complications. The much sought after Havana Club rum is sold internationally by Pernod Ricard, but Bacardi owns the trademark in the United States. The two companies have been fighting for years. If the market opens, Pernod Ricard will likely have to sell Havana Club under the name Havanista in the U.S.)

So even if the embargo is lifted entirely, the transition to allowing Cuban cigars won't be a smooth one. Many of the Cuban cigars one can currently buy abroad would violate trademarks if imported to the U.S. Companies will have to fight this out in court or come to mutually beneficial agreements.

Other likely outcomes are that Cuban products will be marketed under different names in the U.S, or that non-Cuban companies will create their own Cuban cigars or begin using exported Cuban tobacco in their blends. In any case, buying that Cuban Partagas Lusitania I enjoyed so much won't be as simple as stepping into the nearest cigar store, at least in the short term.

3. The FDA Could Ruin Everything

If the embargo is lifted and the trademark disputes are worked out, then we can buy Cuban cigars, right? Wrong.

When Barack Obama signed the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act in 2009, regulatory power over tobacco was granted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Initially the FDA focused on cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, but earlier this year the agency announced plans to extend its authority to other tobacco products, including cigars.

The FDA has outlined two approaches to doing this. The agency's so-called Option 2 would create an exemption for premium cigars, allowing them to be sold under less scrutiny than cigarettes. The proposed standards for this exemption are problematic in a couple ways, such as setting an effective price floor for cigars and banning all characterizing flavors (see my article in the Daily Beast for details). Despite these flaws, Option 2 would leave the door open for eventual Cuban imports.

The FDA's Option 1, however, would be very bad news for new cigars of all kinds, including Cubans. Option 1 treats cigars just like cigarettes. Under the Tobacco Control Act, any tobacco products that were not commercially marketed in the United States as of February 15, 2007, must receive explicit approval by the FDA before being introduced.


Winning approval is virtually impossible. As of my last coverage on the topic, only two new cigarettes had ever made it through the process, while thousands of product applications continue to languish in bureaucratic limbo.

There were a lot of cigars legally on the market in 2007, but obviously none of them were Cuban. We don't know yet know which option the FDA will choose, but Option 1 would have a disastrous impact on innovation in the cigar market. All Cuban imports and any new Cuban blends would have to get past FDA regulators, whose record on cigarettes suggests that this would be a very high hurdle.

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Act that creates a ban cigars all over again.

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I'm looking for something like Option 2. It is possible that the FDA could move the date for grandfathering in new products for 2007; several congressmen, including Speaker of the House John Boehner, R-Ohio, recently urged the FDA to do so in light of the law's impact on cigars and e-cigarettes.

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The eased relations with Cuba are a good reason for breaking out the cigars, but for now smokers may want to follow the lead of John F. Kennedy and keep their own stash of Cubans intact. Given political opposition to removing the embargo, complicated battles over trademarks and byzantine regulations imposed by the FDA, I suspect that I'll be slipping Cubans into my luggage on trips abroad for many years to come.

Jacob Grier is a writer based in Portland, Oregon. This article first appeared on Reason.com.

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Posted Saturday, March 30, 2013 12:00 am

Board says cigar maker can use Cohiba name

A federal panel says **General Cigar Co. Inc.** can continue using the Cohiba trademark on its cigars in the U.S.

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The ruling is the latest in the nearly 16-year legal battle with Cuba's state-run cigar company over the signature Cuban brand.

The Richmond-based subsidiary of **Swedish Match AB** said Thursday that the U.S. Trademark Trial and Appeal Board dismissed Cubatabaco's petition asking it to cancel the company's trademark.

The panel ruled that because courts have held Cubatabaco can't sell its cigars in the U.S., it has no standing to challenge the Cohiba trademark here.

General Cigar said it has sold its Dominican Cohiba cigar in the U.S. since the early 1980s. It received its first registration of the U.S. trademark in 1981.

Three new cell sites expand nTelos' coverage

The wireless company nTelos has expanded coverage of its high-speed network by activating three new cell sites in the greater Richmond area.

The new areas are:

- City of Richmond: Along West Main Street and West Cary Street including the Virginia Commonwealth University campus and the Fan District.

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• South Chesterfield: Along River Road and the surrounding neighborhoods of Chesdin Ridge and Grayson Estates.

Dominion schedules layoffs at Wis. plant

Layoffs from the shutdown of the **Kewaunee Power Station** in eastern Wisconsin are scheduled to start at the end of May.

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development says it received notice that a series of layoffs at the nuclear plant will begin May 31. About 635 workers will lose their jobs.

Dominion Resources Inc. has said it will proceed with plans to close and decommission the plant. The Richmond-based energy provider hasn't been able to find a buyer for the plant.

Smithfield reportedly explores splitting up

Smithfield Foods Inc., the nation's largest hog producer and processor, recently hired investment banking giant Goldman Sachs to explore the possibility of dividing into three companies, Reuters reported recently in a story that cited anonymous sources.

Company officials did not respond to requests for comment.

From staff and wire reports

More briefs, Page D3

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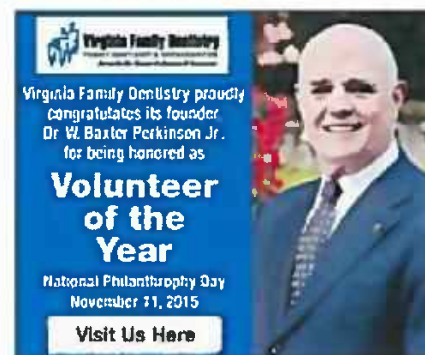
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Stogie Guys Friday Sampler No. 329

As we have since July 2006, each Friday we'll post a mixed bag of quick cigar news and other items of interest. Below is our latest [Friday Sampler](#).

1) The U.S. Trademark Trial & Appeal Board (TTAB) has declined Cubatabaco's petition to cancel General Cigar's trademark of the Cohiba brand. This is the latest victory for General Cigar in its 16-year-old legal battle with Cuba's state-owned tobacco monopoly. At issue is whether the longstanding Cuban embargo enables American companies to sell non-Cuban cigars with Cuban brand names. "This ruling once again affirms what we have believed all along. That Cubatabaco has no merit in challenging General Cigar's ownership of the Cohiba trademark in the United States," said Dan Carr, president of General Cigar. We previously summarized some of the trademark battles being waged as a result of the Cuban embargo [here](#).

2) Gov. Mike Beebe signed House Bill 1531 into law on Tuesday, effectively capping the Arkansas excise tax on cigars at 50 cents per cigar. "Arkansas becomes the ninth state to cap its ad valorem tax rate on cigars, joining Connecticut, Iowa, Michigan, New Hampshire, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin," according to the International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers Association.

3) *Inside the Industry*: Crowned Heads has been working on the "J.D. Howard Reserve" since October (the blend was finalized in early February) but the new cigar won't make its debut until the industry trade show in Las Vegas this summer. The cigar will be available in 5 vitolas: HR46 (6 x 46), HR48 (5 x 48), HR50 (5.6 x 50 figurado), HR52 (6 x 52), and HR54 (5 x 54).

4) *Around the Blogs*: [Stogie Review](#) reviews an Inception. [Half Wheel](#) fires up an OpusX Football. [Cigar Inspector](#) inspects an H. Upmann Legacy. [Stogie Fresh](#) smokes the RoMa Craft Tobacco Intemperance EC XVIII. [Cigar Fan](#) lights up the Trinidad Paradox.

5) *Deal of the Week*: Normally \$65, this [La Gloria Cubana deal](#) features six La Gloria cigars and a dual flame torch lighter for \$40.

[The Stogie Guys](#)



photo credit: [General Cigar](#)

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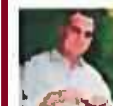
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ENTERTAINMENT

SMOKE SHOW: THE BIG-MONEY FIGHT OVER COHIBA CIGARS

Lifted sanctions could be a drag on at least one major American producer.

G. CLAY WHITTAKER · MAR 4, 2015

It was always going to get worse before it got better. As the Cuba situation improves, a lot of volatile, chaotic stuff is going to happen to the U.S. cigar market, which has long allowed large companies to sell legal stogies under “illegal” brand names. That’s changing right now and the first company to feel the burn, [General Cigar Co.](#), which produces [Cohibas](#), is a big one.

General Cigar is currently waiting on the [Trademark Trial and Appeal Board](#) to decide whether it’s legal for them to continue producing Cohibas as Cubatabaco, Cuba’s state-run cigar company, enters the market. The Cubans say that, if they can’t sell in the U.S., no one should be given free reign to use a label they created.

Why This Is Interesting:

Shortly before the embargo began in the early sixties, many of Cuba’s wealthy brand owners fled the country with a handful of their best workers and some tobacco seeds. They setup shop in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and other locations, and began to rebuild. The Cuban government kept their brand names, facilities, and produced the same cigars for state profit.

Because the embargo was signed into law, a lot of those private owners were able to get their new businesses off the ground with limited competition. In the decades since, a secondary set of trademarks has been established. While the rest of the world smokes, for instance, Cuban [Romeo y Julietas](#), what we buy are often Dominican and Nicaraguan products—made by a separate company.

Here's where it gets confusing: The parent company that owns the U.S. company with some Cuban brands also owns a stake in Cuba's cigar market. So when the embargo is fully lifted, there won't be a conflict with Montecristo, for instance.

However, the other company (which owns Bolivar, Punch, Cohiba and others) does not have a tie to the blood lines in its ancestry. In a sense they're using Cuban trademarks illegally for decades. In a more accurate sense, Cuba has been using stolen trademarks illegally for decades.

It's likely that when the embargo comes down, these brands—whose owners are now long dead but whose descendants deserve some sort of compensation—will be tied up in legal battles.

Except for Cohiba.

See, while all the others owned by General Cigar Co. (Punch, Partagas, Bolivar) are pre-embargo brands, Cohiba is actually an original product of the Cuban state: a private label developed for Castro in the late sixties.

Now Cohiba may be in trouble. Last week the Supreme Court refused to hear arguments in the long-standing legal feud, essentially saying that parent company Cubatabaco is now free to challenge the trademark—and they have facts on their side. So, even though Cuba can't make or sell Cohiba in the U.S., they might have their first legal win, prohibiting someone else to do so.

What This Means For You:

Those Cohibas you see in your smoke shop might not be here forever. They could either come back under a different name or disappear altogether. It's entirely possible that this cash cow has been milked dry.

That said, General makes good cigars under the brand name, so it's likely that even if the bands change, the blends will still be around. In recent years the company has brought in a lot of new blends under the name. So, as this thing gets parsed out, stock up. Go straight for the [Cohiba Commadors](#) produced for last year's limited-edition Jay-Z partnership.

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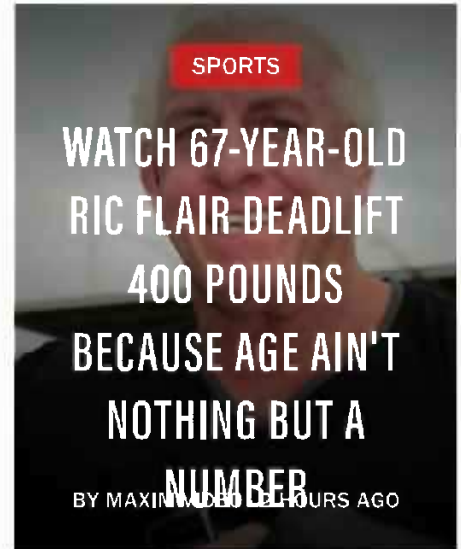
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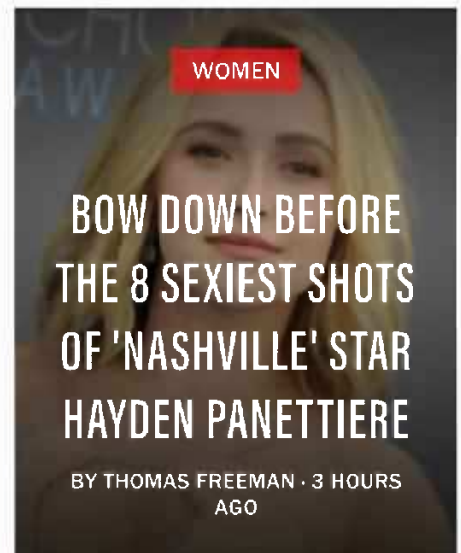
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INTEL | Tue May 17, 2016 | 10:09am EDT

BUZZ-Scandinavian Tobacco Group: the Cohiba question

**** The thawing of relations between Cuba and the US may be negative for Scandinavian Tobacco Group (STG), says Old Mutual Global Investors' Ian Ormiston who avoided buying shares in the company at its recent IPO**

**** STG owns US-based General Cigar, which is locked in a long-running legal battle with a state-owned Cuban cigar company over the Cohiba trademark that both use for their products**

**** Due to a decades-old US trade embargo with Cuba, Cubatabaco cannot sell its Cohiba cigars in the US, but it does sell them in Cuba and elsewhere. General Cigar sells Dominican Republic-produced Cohiba cigars in the US**

**** Legal dispute over whether Cuban company has the right to challenge General Cigar's trademarks in the US despite embargo**

**** US Supreme Court handed a victory to Cubatabaco this yr by declining to intervene in their dispute**

**** Ormiston wary that as Cuba/US relations thaw, Cubans might have a claim on their brand; also flags risk of US pouring investment into Cuba and ensuing expansion in high-quality Cuban cigars, making world market slightly more competitive**

**** Unclear whether embargo will be lifted; Cuba and US reestablished diplomatic relations a year ago after decades of hostility**

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**** Habanos, distribution arm of Cubatabaco, expects to immediately gain 25-30% of US premium cigar market if US lifts embargo and up to 70% of market within a few years**

(RM: tricia.wright1.thomsonreuters.com@reuters.net)

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WIRE

Cuban Cigars Can Now Come to U.S. Will Anyone Care?

While Cuba was cut off from the U.S. for the past 54 years, other countries like the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua have stepped up to serve a \$13 billion premium cigar market. Can Cuban cigars return to dominance when the embargo thaws?



By Will Yakowicz [@WillYakowicz](#)



CREDIT: Getty Images

The forbidden fruit, the Cuban cigar, is no longer forbidden.

On Tuesday, the Obama Administration announced that Americans can now legally buy Cuban-made goods, including cigars, for personal consumption while traveling in other countries.

The changes are part of the slow thawing of the US-Cuba trade embargo that President Obama has been working on for over a year. In January, the U.S. government said Americans traveling legally to Cuba can return with \$100 worth of Cuban cigars.

The announcements seem nominal, but the precedent is significant after 54 years of an all-out ban on travel and commerce. But when relations are completely normalized between the two countries, will Cuban cigars once again reign supreme?

Last year in Havana, Cuban cigar-maker Habanos S.A., which is co-owned by the government and Imperial Tobacco Group Plc of Britain, told reporters that the island nation would immediately gain up to 30 percent of the U.S. premium cigar market once the embargo is lifted. After a few years of scaling up production, Habanos S.A. told Reuters that Cuba would capture 70 percent of the U.S. market.

That is an ambitious goal, considering the U.S. consumes the most cigars out of any country in the world—300 million premium cigars annually, according to a report by the Cigar Association of America. The Dominican Republic is the largest supplier to the U.S., with Nicaragua and Honduras in second and third. Cuba exports 100 million premium cigars a year, just below Nicaragua's production.

David Savona, the executive editor of *Cigar Aficionado*, agrees that Cuban cigars will do well in the states.

"When the embargo does drop, the interest in Cuban cigars will be tremendous. There will be an immediate boom for the Cuban cigar industry," Savona says. But, he doesn't agree that Cuban cigars will swallow 70 percent of the U.S. market.

"I think that is rather outlandish," Savona said. "The Cubans don't have a lot of perspective on the U.S. market because they've been out of it for 50 years. What has happened in the last 50 years is that the non-Cuban cigars, from the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Honduras, have become exceptional products."

Savona doesn't argue with the fact that Cuba is the birthplace of the premium cigar and the country makes superb, distinctive and powerful smokes, but, he says, the market is so big and there are so many great cigars that not one country could logically take over.

Pat Gargano, the manager at Barclay-Rex, a storied cigar shop in New York's financial district, says that Cuba will also encounter logistical and supply chain problems when the embargo drops.

"Cuba cannot even supply the European markets with enough cigars," Gargano says.

The Cubans haven't planted enough fields to supply the U.S. and the European and Asian markets at a consistent basis, Gargano explains. That's because cigars, like whiskey, requires aging. The process of planting tobacco seeds and harvesting the leaves takes time, but the curing and aging process can take even longer, says David Diamante, founder of Diamante's Brooklyn Cigar Lounge in Fort Greene.

"It takes a long time to make a good cigar," Diamante says. "You have to age tobacco and the tobaccos have to marry. When you have such a demand for a truly organic product, from seed to box, that is hand-rolled, there is going to be a problem with supply. There is already a problem with supply."

As an owner of a cigar shop, Diamante says if Cuban cigars do enter the U.S. market it will be good for the industry.

"There will be a surge. You will have a huge glut of people, especially first-timers, coming to buy the forbidden fruit," he says. "It will level off eventually, but it will bump up sales immediately."

There is also a complicated legal issue that needs to be settled before Cuban cigars can enter the U.S. market. For anyone who has smoked a Cohiba, Montecristo or Romeo y Julieta, you know there are two different versions: the Cuban and non-Cuban.

Cohiba, which was created in 1960 for Fidel Castro, is owned by Cubatabaco, the Cuban state monopoly. But thanks to the embargo, General Cigar Company bought the U.S. trademark in 1981. In 1997, General Cigar tried to market its Dominican Cohibas outside of the U.S. and Cubatabaco sued. The legal battle has rumbled on ever since.

"Trade mark battles and ownership issues will have to be hammered out. It won't be as simple as the embargo is over and now you get your Cuban Cohibas this year," Savona says.

Calls to General Cigar were not returned.

Diamante points out that although French wine is thought to be the gold standard, people still buy wine from Chile, Napa Valley and other regions. Cigar smokers, like other aficionados, like variety. Savona echoes the sentiment; when it comes to smoking cigars, smokers like unrestricted variety.

"It would be a sad world to be limited to one type of cigar, or a cigar from only one country of origin," Savona says.

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Cohiba V. Cohiba

By Gregory Mottola (/author/show/id/393)

Posted December 27, 2016



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It's the trademark case that refuses to die and it's still under litigation. Casually known as Cohiba v. Cohiba, the *Empresa Cubana del Tabaco v. Culbro Corp.* lawsuit started nearly 20 years ago when Cubatabaco, owners of the Cohiba trademark, sued General Cigar Co. for its use of the Cohiba name in the United States. General registered Cohiba in 1981 and then reregistered the

trademark in 1995. In response, Cuba sought to cancel General's U.S. trademark. Since then, the case has gone arduously back and forth with numerous appeals and reappeals that showed victories and losses for both sides—and the issue remains unresolved.

The case raises an interesting question: Does a country have any trademark rights in the United States when it's under an embargo? In the case of Cohiba—the most high-profile premium cigar brand in the world—one court of law believes it does. Another disagrees. And the Supreme Court refuses to get involved.

The timeline here shows the highlights of the legal embroilment over the last 19 years. This case has outlived former Culbro Corp. chairman Edgar Cullman Sr., who passed away in 2011, and now Fidel Castro.

January 1997 Cubatabaco files suit with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to cancel General's use of the Cohiba trademark.

November 1997 Cubatabaco files suit with U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York for, among other things, trademark infringement.

March 2004 Judge Robert Sweet of the U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York, cancels General's trademark of Cohiba, ruling in favor of Cubatabaco. The judge rules that the trademark elapsed as a result of nonuse from the late '80s to early '90s. General appeals.

February 2005 General wins its appeal. The U.S. Court of Appeals Second Circuit, rules that the Cuban embargo prohibits Cuban companies from acquiring property rights in the U.S., which extends to trademark use. Cubatabaco appeals.

June 2005 The same Second Circuit Court of Appeals denies Cubatabaco's motion to rehear its case.

November 2008 The case is reopened in light of a new legal precedent (*ITC v. Punchgini*). Cubatabaco appeals to the U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York, citing a prior ruling as basis for its claim against General.

December 2009 Judge Sweet once again rules in favor of the Cuban cigar industry when it issues an injunction for General Cigar Co. to stop selling its Cohiba cigars in the United States. Furthermore, Sweet rules that Cubatabaco is entitled to monetary relief. General appeals.

July 2010 The Second Circuit Court of Appeals rules in favor of General Cigar Co. (http://www.cigaraficionado.com/webfeatures/show/id/Cohiba-v-Cohiba-US-Court-Rules-Against-Cubans_3941) Circuit judges Reena Raggi, Gerard E. Lynch and Denny Chin conclude that Cubatabaco's arguments are "without merit."

March 2013 General wins another round, this time before the USPTO's Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB), which dismisses a petition by Cubatabaco to cancel General's use of the Cohiba name.

June 2014 A U.S. Court of Appeals, Federal Circuit, reverses TTAB's decision citing misinterpretations of the embargo's rules and nullifying the 2005 decision of the Second Circuit. In other words, the Federal Circuit and Second Circuit don't agree on Cuba's legal right to cancel a U.S. trademark.

November 2014 General petitions for a *writ of certiorari* in hopes of a review by the Supreme Court and ultimately, an overturning of the lower court's decision.

February 2015 The writ is denied. Cubatabaco can once again seek to bar General's use of the Cohiba trademark. The case will now go back to the TTAB.

A previous version of this article first appeared in Cigar Aficionado's April 2016 issue as part of a retrospective on 50 Years Of Cohiba (<http://www.cigaraficionado.com/webfeatures/show/id/50-years-of-cohiba-18681>).

See Also:

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(</webfeatures/show/id/special-cigars-announced-for-cubas-habanos-festival-19140>)

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(</webfeatures/show/id/american-airlines-plans-service-cutbacks-to-cuba-19137>)

Saturday, November 26, 2016

Fidel Castro Dies (</webfeatures/show/id/fidel-castro-dies-19125>)

Monday, November 21, 2016

Cuba Receives Regional-Edition Saint Luis Rey (</webfeatures/show/id/cuba-receives-regional-edition-saint-luis-rey-19122>)

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Christian · December 28, 2016 11:47am ET

Wonderful piece and timeline of what is seemingly a ping pong match of rulings. That's a lot of info you've compiled and I appreciate keeping us up to date. I'm looking forward to the next chapter. Great work!

M SHULMAN COEUR D ALENE, ID, UNITED STATES, December 28, 2016 8:21pm ET

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5/17/16 Reuters News 14:09:08

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May 17, 2016

BUZZ-Scandinavian Tobacco Group: the Cohiba question

** The thawing of relations between Cuba and the US may be negative for Scandinavian Tobacco Group (STG) , says Old Mutual Global Investors' Ian Ormiston who avoided buying shares in the company at its recent IPO

** STG owns US-based General Cigar, which is locked in a long-running legal battle with a state-owned Cuban cigar company over the Cohiba trademark that both use for their products

** Due to a decades-old US trade embargo with Cuba, Cubatabaco cannot sell its Cohiba cigars in the US, but it does sell them in Cuba and elsewhere. General Cigar sells Dominican Republic-produced Cohiba cigars in the US

** Legal dispute over whether Cuban company has the right to challenge General Cigar's trademarks in the US despite embargo

** US Supreme Court handed a victory to Cubatabaco this yr by declining to intervene in their dispute [nL1N0VU2OC]

** Ormiston wary that as Cuba/US relations thaw, Cubans might have a claim on their brand; also flags risk of US pouring investment into Cuba and ensuing expansion in high-quality Cuban cigars, making world market slightly more competitive

** Unclear whether embargo will be lifted; Cuba and US reestablished diplomatic relations a year ago after decades of hostility [nL5N18D662]

** Habanos, distribution arm of Cubatabaco, expects to immediately gain 25-30% of US premium cigar market if US lifts embargo and up to 70% of market within a few years [nL1N0VX1MN]

(RM: tricia.wright1.thomsonreuters.com@reuters.net)

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Company: CULBRO CORP; OLD MUTUAL PLC; SCANDINAVIAN TOBACCO GROUP AS

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July 22, 2015

A Tale Of Trade And Trademarks: General Cigar Co., Inc. v. Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco

Ms Shrutih Tewarie

By Ms Shrutih Tewarie

The United States has taken several recent steps towards normalizing its ties with Cuba and, just yesterday , the two countries re-opened embassies in each other's capitals for the first time since 1961. Despite these developments, one thing that remains largely unchanged for now is the Cuban embargo . Enforced by the Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), the Cuban embargo, as codified in the Cuban Assets Control Regulations , 31 CFR Part 15 (CACR), still prohibits most transactions between persons subject to US jurisdiction and Cuba. Highlighting the uncertainties of navigating the requirements of the Cuban embargo against the current political backdrop is General Cigar Co., Inc. v. Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco , a dispute over what are arguably Cuba's most iconic exports: cigars.

A Tale Of Trade And Trademarks: General Cigar Co., Inc. v. Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco - Foley Hoag LLP (United States) 22 July 2015

The Dispute

The word " Cohiba " derives from an indigenous Caribbean word for tobacco. General Cigar, an American company, manufactures and distributes cigars using the COHIBA mark. General Cigar owns two trademark registrations for the COHIBA mark in the United States. Empresa Cubana d/b/a Cubatabaco ("Cubatabaco"), a Cuban company, also manufactures and distributes cigars using the same COHIBA mark. Under the CACR, Cubatabaco is prohibited from selling its cigars in the United States. Specifically, the CACR generally prohibits both the importation of products of Cuban origin, and the "transfer of property rights . . . to a Cuban entity by a person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States."

However, the CACR is subject to certain exceptions, called "general licenses." Of significance here, 31 CFR § 515.527 allows Cuban entities to engage in transactions "related to the registration and renewal" of trademarks before the USPTO. Using this general license, in 1997, Cubatabaco filed an application with the USPTO to register its COHIBA mark for cigars and related goods. Cubatabaco based its trademark application on its registration of the same mark in Cuba. When the USPTO denied Cubatabaco's application because of General Cigar's prior registrations for the same mark, Cubatabaco filed a petition to cancel General Cigar's registrations with the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB). Cubatabaco also asked and received permission from OFAC to commence a federal lawsuit against General Cigar. Cubatabaco filed suit in the Southern District of New York, alleging trademark infringement, seeking to cancel General Cigar's registration and requesting an injunction against General Cigar's use of the COHIBA mark in the United States.

Proceedings in the Second Circuit

After the District Court ruled for Cubatabaco on its infringement claim, the Second Circuit reversed. The Second Circuit found that because "property" as defined under the CACR specifically includes trademarks, any acquisition by Cubatabaco of the COHIBA trademark would constitute a transfer of property rights in violation of the CACR. The Second Circuit also rejected Cubatabaco's argument that it was entitled to obtain an injunction preventing General Cigar from using the mark in the United States, finding that this would also entail a prohibited transfer.

Following the Second Circuit's decision, the TTAB dismissed Cubatabaco's petition for cancellation without reaching its merits, holding that Cubatabaco lacked standing to pursue the matter further in light of the "binding, federal court judgment" from the Second Circuit.

Proceedings in the Federal Circuit

But the story did not end there. After the dismissal by the TTAB, Cubatabaco appealed to the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. In a turn of events, the Federal Circuit vacated the TTAB's decision, holding that the TTAB had erred in holding that the judgment from the Second Circuit barred any further litigation of Cubatabaco's claims. In the Federal Circuit's view, the Second Circuit had never addressed whether Cubatabaco could seek cancellation of General Cigar's registrations before the TTAB. The Federal Circuit found that Cubatabaco was indeed authorized to seek such relief pursuant to 31 CFR § 515.527's general license allowing transactions "related to the registration and renewal" of trademarks. Further, the Federal Circuit also stated that, if Cubatabaco was successful in cancelling General Cigar's registrations, Cubatabaco could then register its COHIBA mark with the USPTO.

Following the Federal Circuit's decision, General Cigar filed a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court. Despite General Cigar's arguments that the Federal Circuit's decision raised issues of national importance regarding the proper interpretation of the CACR, earlier this year the Supreme Court refused to hear the case, letting the Federal Circuit have the last word in this long-standing litigation. Cubatabaco recently requested a resumption of the TTAB proceedings.

Implications and Unanswered Questions

The Supreme Court's silence on the issues raised by this case leaves a host of questions unanswered. Is the Federal Circuit's opinion merely an application of the general license contained in 31 CFR § 515.527, or are its implications broader? What is the relationship between this decision and the famous marks doctrine under Article 6bis of the Paris Convention, about which the different Courts of Appeals have very different approaches. Further, was the Federal Circuit's interpretation of the CACR the right one in light of the recent shift in U.S. policy towards normalizing relations with Cuba, or should courts construe the CACR narrowly in light of OFAC's warning that "most transactions between the United States, or persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction, and Cuba continue to be prohibited" even following President Obama's announcement in December of last year? As the U.S. attempts to restore its diplomatic ties with Cuba, finding an answer to these questions will become increasingly important.

To view Foley Hoag's Trademark and Copyright Law Blog please [click here](#)

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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Company: CUBATABACO; CULBRO CORP

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March 27, 2015

Let's Do Business: How Lifting The Embargo Has Opened The Door For Cuban Trademark Suits

Timothy Geigner

Mar 27, 2015

I'll miss the Cuban embargo. The easing of relations that it brings with it will likely mean the end of the 1950s-style spy games and crazy plots -- like the CIA plot designed to make a leader's beard fall out. Instead, we've finally decided that the United States is open for Cuban business. And you know what that means: trademark lawsuits !

The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled in favor of a Cuban state-owned company and refused to intervene in a dispute over the "Cohiba" trademark. This is the most recent development in the long-standing rivalry between General Cigar Co Inc., an American (and Scandinavian) company, and Cubatabaco, a Cuban company.

How fun! We finally open up the borders for some business with Cuba and one of the Castro companies decides it's trademark time! Keep in mind, of course, that the state that owns Cubatabaco is a communist nation, but not so communist that they'll refuse to use our capitalist tools to make that money. This dispute actually goes back nearly two decades, with Cubatabaco originally filing a trademark claim in 1997, which was eventually tossed in 2005 by the Second Circuit court, finding that any transfer of property, including a trademark, to a Cuban company would violate the embargo.

But now that the embargo is gone, Cubatabaco has refiled, with a lower court ruling that the Cuban company could challenge General Cigar's mark with the USPTO even before the embargo was lifted -- a ruling the Supreme Court has refused to send back for review. So there appears to be nothing standing in the way of a trademark challenge.

All that said, it's difficult to see how valid a challenge is, actually, given several factors. First, the two companies as yet don't compete in the same markets, due to the legacy of the embargo. Second, the word "cohiba" might not deserve a trademark held by anyone, given that it is simply a foreign word that means "tobacco" in Taino, a language of the Caribbean. That would be like getting a trademark on your beer brand, Cerveza.

However this turns out, welcome officially to business in the States, Cuba! Now that the embargo doesn't keep property from transferring your way, it's all trademark, patents and copyright from here on out!

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US Official News (Pakistan)

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February 24, 2015

High Court Hands Win to Cuban Firm Over Use of Cohiba Brand Name in U.S.

Staff Reporter

Washington: Tobacco News and Information has issued the following news release:

The U.S. Supreme Court gave a victory to state-run Cuban tobacco firm Cubatabaco on Monday by refusing to intervene in the legal case against a U.S.-based rival firm over the Cohiba trademark that both use for their cigars.

The high court refused to hear an appeal by U.S. firm General Cigar seeking to overturn a ruling issued last June by a federal appeals court that found in favor of Cubatabaco.

The decision allows the Cuban firm to once again request that the patent on the Cohiba brand registered by the Delaware-based General Cigar be cancelled, a move the firm must direct to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Trademark Trial and Appeal Board.

The dispute dates back to 2009, when Cubatabaco won a lawsuit against General Cigar for using and marketing the Cohiba brand name for the latter's products in the United States.

The U.S. firm, which in 1992 began selling Dominican tobacco products under the Cuban Cohiba trademark, appealed the ruling.

Selling Cuban-made Cohiba cigars is prohibited in the United States under the economic embargo imposed on the communist island in 1962.

Culbro Corp., a company that later was acquired by General Cigar, registered the Cohiba trademark in the United States in 1981 and the conglomerate reacquired the rights to the name in 1995.

Meanwhile, Cubatabaco registered the Cohiba trademark in 1972 in Cuba and, later, in more than 100 other countries.

Since then, the U.S. firm has claimed that the embargo against Cuba prevents Cubatabaco from reclaiming patent rights in the United States, while the Cuban firm maintains that a registered trademark was stolen from it.

In its decision last June, the federal appeals court held that Cubatabaco has a legal basis for requesting the cancellation of General Cigar's patent.

However, Cubatabaco this time placed its request before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, which rejected it in 2013 saying that the Cuban firm had no legal basis for the claim.

The case went to the Supreme Court shortly after the historic announcement in mid-December that Washington and Havana are going to resume diplomatic and other ties, although that had no influence on this case since only Congress can lift the embargo on the island and, for the moment, it has not done so.

Among the measures included in the announcement of normalizing relations with Havana, the U.S. government now authorizes travelers who visit Cuba to bring back up to \$100 worth of tobacco and alcohol products.

In case of any query regarding this article or other content needs please contact: editorial@plusmediasolutions.com

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Industry: (Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); Caribbean (1CA06); Cuba (1CU43); Latin America (1LA15); North America (1NO39))

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February 23, 2015

U.S. Supreme Court hands victory to Cuban cigar company

Lawrence Hurley

Will Dunham

WASHINGTON, Feb 23 (Reuters) - The U.S. Supreme Court handed a victory to a state-owned Cuban cigar company on Monday by declining to intervene in its long-running battle with a U.S.-based rival over the Cohiba trademark that both use for their products.

By refusing to hear an appeal filed by Delaware-based General Cigar Co Inc, the high court left intact a ruling in favor of the Cuban company, Cubatabaco.

Due to the long-running U.S. trade embargo with Cuba, the Cuban company cannot sell its Cohiba cigars in the United States, but it does sell them in Cuba and elsewhere. General Cigar sells Dominican Republic-produced Cohiba cigars in the United States.

General Cigar is owned by Scandinavian Tobacco Group A/S, which is partly owned by Swedish Match AB.<SWMA.ST>.

The legal dispute is over whether the Cuban company has the right to challenge General Cigar's trademarks in the United States despite the embargo.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit last June ruled in favor of Cubatabaco. After the Supreme Court's denial, the case will now move forward at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Trademark Trial and Appeal Board.

The case reached the high court just after President Barack Obama announced in December that he planned to loosen some of the U.S.-Cuban restrictions, although the broad trade embargo will remain intact.

Under an easing of travel restrictions between the United States and Cuba under Obama's changes, American visitors will be able to buy up to \$100 worth of cigars, the island's most famous product, bring them home and smoke them. [ID:nL1N0U11L6]

In January, the Obama administration said it would allow U.S. exports of telecommunications, agricultural and construction equipment, permit expanded travel by Americans to the island and open banking relations.

The case is General Cigar Co v. Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco, U.S. Supreme Court, No. 14-512.

(Reporting by Lawrence Hurley; Editing by Will Dunham)

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Company: SCANDINAVIAN TOBACCO GROUP AS; CULBRO CORP; SWEDISH MATCH AB; EMBRAER SA; CUBATABACO

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December 3, 2014

Trademarks In Cuba And The Cohiba And Havana Club Wars

Mr Raul Valdes-Fauli

By Mr Raul Valdes-Fauli

Cuba's demand for trademark protection within a legal framework of fair competition is a public interest of the state as part of its current efforts to transition to a market-oriented economy. Thus, the country has passed advanced intellectual property protection legislation in line with its active participation in the international arena. As a result, trademarks registered in the United States enjoy certain protection in Cuba under its current trademark laws and the international treaties to which Cuba and the United States are both signatories.

Trademarks In Cuba And The Cohiba And Havana Club Wars - Fox Rothschild LLP (Cuba) 03 December 2014

Any patents and trademarks can be registered in Cuba today with the Cuban Office of Intellectual Property (OCR). U.S. companies that registered trademarks and patents in Cuba prior to January 1, 1959, retain those rights subject to meeting renewal obligations. Since 1995, U.S. companies wishing to register trademarks and patents in Cuba for the first time or renew their patents and trademarks have been able to do so in Cuba.

However, the Cuban government has threatened to eliminate its support of U.S. trademarks on the island if the U.S. government persists in enforcing certain amendments made during the 1990s to the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR).

This article will examine the general Cuban trademark landscape and the status of two high-profile IP disputes in the United States, involving two of Cuba's most famous products: cigars and rum.

Cuban Trademark Legislation

Decree-Law 68 of May 14, 1983, "Inventions, Scientific Discoveries, Industrial Models, Trademarks and Appellations of Origin," was modified by Decree-Law No. 203 of 1999 due to the accession of Cuba to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and thus to the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, commonly known as the TRIPS Agreement.

Decree-Law 203 of 1999, together with successive regulations including Decree-Laws 290 and 291 of 2011, comprise the legal framework of Cuba's trademark laws and regulations, whose main objective is to provide further protection with respect to trademarks and to ban the registration of a sign, mark or trade name that induces the public to error.

Cuba's current legal framework prohibits registration of a sign, mark or trade name that is identical to an earlier trademark registration or pending application for the same products or services. Cuba's laws also follow the principle that industrial property gives the right of exclusivity and exclusion, and that the registration of a trademark gives its owner the right to exclude others from taking a series of actions that interfere with its exclusive right to use the mark. Other criterion is also included as grounds for invalidating the registration of a mark, including acting in bad faith because the trademark used for goods or services is identical or similar to one previously applied for, registered or well-known in other countries. These protections are meant to protect business interests and the risk of confusion of association in consumers.

Key provisions of Cuba's trademark laws, such as provisions for preliminary relief and customs enforcement measures, are intended to bring the country in line with the requirements of the WTO. The preliminary relief to infringement cases may take the form of a temporary restraining order or seizure, including on an ex parte basis. Preliminary relief orders may last up to 20 days. Similarly, preliminary customs injunctive relief is valid for 10 days and, for good cause, may be extended for another 10 days. In both instances, a bond needs to be posted to guarantee any damages in the event the proceedings were not justified. These procedures are similar to those used in most countries to fight piracy. Of course, an applicant or holder seeking to fight piracy would need to institute judicial action. In contrast, under U.S. law, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is empowered to exclude, and in certain cases, destroy (counterfeit) goods without the need to commence a case in court.

Cuban legislation grants the holder of a trademark a series of rights to act against those who violate the law. The holder can seek the termination of infringing acts, compensation for damages, seizure of the proceeds related to the infringement, bans on the import or export of goods, seizure of materials or media related to the infringement, as well as the ownership and delivery of the products, materials or means relating to the offense. A trademark violation conviction will also be published.

The holder can also apply to the court for an order to prevent further infringement, avoiding its consequences, obtaining or preserving evidence or ensuring that the effectiveness of the action requires provisional measures that may be requested before initiating action, together with it or after its inception.

U.S. Laws and Regulations on Cuba's Trademarks

The U.S. government enacted an exception to the 1963 U.S. trade embargo on Cuba in the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR). The CACR was amended in 1995 and again in 1999 for the protection of intellectual property, including trademarks, patents, commercial names and copyrights in Cuba belonging to U.S. individuals or corporations.

The 1999 amendments, contained in the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1999 (Omnibus Act), have been controversial in Cuba. There are three primary elements of the 1999 amendments, which have two key effects in aggregate: (1) imposition of a consent requirement on those asserting rights in trademarks or trade names, which are the same or substantially close to that used with confiscated assets; and (2) the removal of these situations from judicial oversight. More specifically:

§211(a)(1) of the Omnibus Act - Consent Section (a)(1) contains the requirement that the original owner or bona fide successor-in-interest of a confiscated mark of trade name consent to further mark or name activity mainly by prohibiting any "transactions" or "payments," the latter a requirement for most U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) procedural actions. §211(a)(2) of the Omnibus Act Foreclosing judicial enforcement of registration rights Subsection 211(a)(2) contains the first of two restrictions on the judiciary but limits its application to a defined class. The text provides that: "No U.S. court shall recognize, enforce or otherwise validate any assertion of rights by a designated national based on common law rights or registration obtained under such section 515.527 of such a confiscated mark, trade name, or commercial name." §211(b) of the Omnibus Act- Judicial consideration of treaty rights foreclosed Section

211(b) of the Omnibus Act limits the ability of U.S. courts to utilize §44 via the following language: "No U.S. court shall recognize, enforce or otherwise validate any assertion of treaty rights by a designated national or its successor-in-interest under sections 44 (b) or (e) of the Trademark Act of 1946 (15 U.S.C. 1126 (b) or (e)) for a mark, trade name, or commercial name that is the same as or substantially similar to a mark, trade name, or commercial name that was used in connection with a business or assets that were confiscated unless the original owner of such mark, trade name or commercial name, or the bona fide successor-in-interest has expressly consented."

Examples of Cuban Intellectual Property Disputes

Two key intellectual property disputes involving Cuban brands in the United States involve the country's famous cigars and rum.

Cohiba Cigars Dispute

General Cigar, a U.S. company, registered the Cohiba trademark for cigars in 1995. Empresa Cubana del Tabaco, dba Cubatabaco, a Cuban company, sued in federal court, claiming superior rights to the name Cohiba under § 44(b) of the Lanham Act, which recognizes well-known marks. The theory was that the mark was famous in Cuba, the fame extended to the United States and the fame preceded the date of first use of the mark by the U.S. user, Culbro, a subsidiary of General Cigar. The district court agreed with the plaintiff and recognized that the well-known trademark doctrine applied to this case. The Second Circuit reversed the decision on the grounds that the Cuban embargo barred Cuban firms from acquiring trademark rights in the United States through the well-known trademark doctrine. It further ruled that the same regulations prevent Cubatabaco from seeking cancellation of General Cigar's trademark registrations but left it to the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (Board) to determine the preclusive effect of the Second Circuit's decision. In 2013, the Board denied Cubatabaco's petition to cancel General Cigar's registration after determining that Cubatabaco lacked standing.

On June 4, 2014, the Federal circuit reversed the Board's decision (*Empresa Cubana del Tabaco v. Gen. Cigar Co.*, 753 F.3d 1270). It held that Cubatabaco does have standing to seek cancellation of General Cigar's registrations that block Cubatabaco's ability to register the Cohiba mark.

In the most recent development, on October 31, 2014, General Cigar filed a petition for writ of certiorati seeking to have the U.S. Supreme Court answer the question of whether the CACR can bar Cubatabaco from obtaining cancellation of the Cohiba trademarks held by General Cigar and whether the issue of preclusion bars Cubatabaco from seeking administrative cancellation of the trademarks registered by General Cigar. If certiorati is denied, the way would be paved for Cubatabaco to go back to the Board and request resumption of the cancellation actions it started against General Cigar years ago. As of this writing, General Cigar's registration is still in effect on the records of the USPTO, although under challenge by Cubatabaco, and Cubatabaco's application for the mark is suspended pending disposition of the cancellation petition.

Rum Dispute

The Havana Club mark for rum was owned by the Cuban family Arechabala in Cuba. The family also owned a U.S. registration, but that was allowed to lapse in the 1970s. The Arechabala family's property was expropriated by the Cuban government after the Cuban Revolution of 1959. The Arechabalas left Cuba subsequent to the revolution and assigned all their rights in Havana Club for rum worldwide to Bacardi in the 1990s, which started to make rum in the Bahamas.

After the expropriation, the Cuban government began production on a type of Havana Club rum in Cuba and entered into a joint-venture agreement with Pernod Ricard, who registered the mark with the PTO in 1978.

In 1996, the Cuban embargo went into effect, requiring the PTO to not enforce trademark rights in the United States if the trademark was used in connection with a business or asset confiscated by the Cuban government, unless the original owner of the mark provided consent.

The U.S. courts held that Pernod Ricard could not renew or enforce its trademark rights in the United States for the Havana Club mark for rum because of the Cuban embargo. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal and after a 17-year legal battle, Pernod Ricard changed the trademark to Havanista. Bacardi successfully lobbied Congress for passage of the so-called Bacardi Bill (Section 211 of the U.S. Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1998), which forbids the registration or enforcement of a trademark in the United States that is the same as or similar to one used in connection with a business or assets that were confiscated. As a result, Pernod Ricard was ultimately prevented from U.S. registration of the Havana Club trademark in the PTO.

The Cuban embargo has been challenged at the WTO, which found the Cuban embargo in violation of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) because it discriminates against Cuban owners. The United States has been granted time to change its regulations to be consistent with TRIPS and to apply it to all citizens, not just Cuban citizens. However, the regulations have not yet been changed.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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— Index References —

Company: AXION POWER INTERNATIONAL INC; CUBATABACO; CULBRO CORP; EMBRAER SA; PERNOD RICARD SA

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Legal (1LE33); Patents (1PA79); Smoking (1SM71); Trademarks (1TR15); World Organizations (1IN77); World Trade (1WO85); World Trade Organization (1WO41))

Industry: (Agriculture, Food & Beverage (1AG53); Alcoholic Beverages (1AL86); Beverages (1BE22); Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Food & Beverage Production (1FO79); Rum (1RU61); Spirits (1SP77); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); Caribbean (1CA06); Cuba (1CU43); Latin America (1LA15); North America (1NO39))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (Cohiba And Havana Club Wars - Fox Rothschild LLP; Cohiba Cigars DisputeGeneral Cigar)

Keywords: (Intellectual Property); (International Law); (Trademark); (International Trade & Investment)

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August 14, 2014

Federal Circuit Smokes Cuban Entity On Standing Issue

Ms Ulrika Mattsson

By Ms Ulrika Mattsson

Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco (d/b/a Cubatabaco) v. General Cigar Co., Inc.

Federal Circuit Smokes Cuban Entity On Standing Issue - McDermott Will & Emery (United States) 14 August 2014

The U. S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit reversed the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board's (the Board) decision, holding that a Cuban cigar manufacturer's standing to pursue cancellation of two federal registrations was not barred in light of a prior decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which held that the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) precluded the Cuban company from owning the marks at issue. *Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco (d/b/a Cubatabaco) v. General Cigar Co., Inc.*, Case No. 13-1465 (Fed. Cir., June 4, 2014) (Rader, J.).

The plaintiff, Cubatabaco, is a Cuban entity that owns the COHIBA mark in Cuba for use in connection with cigars. The defendant, General Cigar, owns two trademark registrations for the mark COHIBA for use in connection with cigars.

In 1997, Cubatabaco filed an application to register the COHIBA mark in the United States for cigars and related goods, based on its registration of the same mark in Cuba. Cubatabaco relied on Section 44(e) of the Lanham Act, which allows a foreign applicant to rely on a foreign registration to register the same mark in the United States if the applicant has a bona fide intent to use the mark in commerce. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) rejected Cubatabaco's trademark application based on General Cigar's registrations, so Cubatabaco filed a petition to cancel General Cigar's trademark registrations for COHIBA.

Under the CACR, a Cuban entity is prohibited from a wide range of transactions in the United States. However, the CACR contains certain exceptions for Cuban entities to engage in certain otherwise prohibited transactions pursuant to a general or a specific license. Cubatabaco obtained a special license and sued General Cigar over its use of the COHIBA mark.

The district court cancelled the two trademark registrations owned by General Cigar but the 2d Circuit reversed the decision, stating that the court could not grant Cubatabaco injunctive relief because that remedy would entail a prohibited transfer of property under the CACR, since Cubatabaco would acquire ownership of the mark.

When the PTO cancellation proceeding resumed, the Board held that Cubatabaco lacked standing to challenge the trademark registrations of the same mark because Cubatabaco was deemed to have no property interest in the mark. Cubatabaco appealed.

On appeal, the Federal Circuit found that neither the 2d Circuit decision nor the CACR prohibits Cubatabaco from registering the mark. The Court also held that CACR authorizes Cubatabaco to seek cancellation of registrations that block its application: "Because the USPTO refused Cubatabaco's registration based on likelihood of confusion with General Cigar's Registrations, Cubatabaco has a real interest in cancelling the Registrations and a reasonable belief that the Registrations blocking its application are causing it damage. Cubatabaco therefore has a cause of action under the Lanham Act to seek cancellation of the Registrations."

Finally, the Federal Circuit found that neither issue preclusion nor claim preclusion barred any of the grounds on which Cubatabaco sought cancellation. Claim preclusion did not apply because the 2d Circuit did not render a final judgment on the merits of the cancellation claims. Issue preclusion did not apply because of various reasons depending on the specific grounds, e.g., the 2d Circuit did not address a particular ground or determination of the issue was not necessary to the judgment.

Federal Circuit Smokes Cuban Entity On Standing Issue

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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---- Index References ----

Company: CUBATABACO; CULBRO CORP; EMBRAER SA

News Subject: (Health & Family (1HE30); Smoking (1SM71); Drug Addiction (1DR84); Trademarks (1TR15); Legal (1LE33); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Judicial Cases & Rulings (1JU36))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Caribbean (1CA06); Cuba (1CU43); North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Americas (1AM92))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (Cubatabaco)

Keywords: (Intellectual Property); (Trademark)

Word Count: 655

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August 6, 2014

Limits To Enjoining Trademark Infringement Do Not Necessarily Preclude Standing To Cancel The Trademark Registration Before The TTAB

Ms Mandy Song

By Ms Mandy Song

In *Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco v. General Cigar Co.*, No. 13-1465 (Fed. Cir. June 4, 2014), the Federal Circuit vacated the TTAB's SJ decision that *Empresa Cubana Del Tabaco* (d/b/a *Cubatabaco*) ("Cubatabaco") lacked standing to seek cancellation of trademark registrations owned by General Cigar Co., Inc. ("General Cigar"). Though not decided by the TTAB, the Court also held that neither issue nor claim preclusion barred Cubatabaco's Amended Petition to seek cancellation. Accordingly, the Court remanded for proceedings consistent with its opinion.

Limits To Enjoining Trademark Infringement Do Not Necessarily Preclude Standing To Cancel The Trademark Registration Before The TTAB - Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP (United States) 06 August 2014

General Cigar is a Delaware corporation that owns two trademark registrations for the COHIBA mark for use in connection with cigars ("the Registrations"). Cubatabaco is a Cuban entity that owns the COHIBA mark in Cuba and supplies cigars bearing that mark throughout the world, except the United States, where the Cuban Assets Control Regulations ("CACR") prohibits such sales. CACR also prohibits a "transfer of property rights . . . to a Cuban entity by a person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States." Slip op. at 3 (quoting 31 C.F.R. § 515.201(b)). The CACR is, however, subject to exceptions: it authorizes Cuban entities to obtain a general or specific license to engage in certain otherwise prohibited transactions, such as "transactions 'related to the registration and renewal' of trademarks" before the PTO. Id. (quoting 31 C.F.R. 515.527(a)(1)).

Under a CACR general license, Cubatabaco attempted to register the COHIBA mark in the United States based on its registration of the same mark in Cuba. The PTO cited General Cigar's Registrations as grounds for refusing Cubatabaco's registration due to a likelihood of confusion, and Cubatabaco filed a petition to cancel the Registrations. Cubatabaco also commenced litigation against General Cigar in the Southern District of New York, alleging trademark infringement and seeking, inter alia, to enjoin General Cigar's use of the COHIBA mark in the United States and to cancel General Cigar's competing Registrations. The TTAB suspended the cancellation proceedings pending the outcome of the district court action. The district court canceled the Registrations and permanently enjoined General Cigar's use of the COHIBA mark. On appeal, the Second Circuit vacated the cancellation and the injunction, holding that Cubatabaco could not obtain the injunctive relief it sought because the remedy would entail a prohibited transfer of property under the CACR since Cubatabaco would acquire ownership of the underlying mark.

The TTAB proceedings then resumed. Cubatabaco filed an Amended Petition, and General Cigar moved for SJ on the grounds that Cubatabaco lacked standing and that the principles of issue and claim preclusion barred Cubatabaco's

Amended Petition. The TTAB granted the motion, finding that Cubatabaco lacked standing in light of the Second Circuit's decision, but expressly noting that it did not need to reach the merits of the preclusion claims.

"Cubatabaco therefore has a legitimate interest in the cancellation of the Registrations that are causing Cubatabaco damage by blocking its application. Indeed, if Cubatabaco proves successful in the cancellation proceedings, Cubatabaco could obtain registration of the COHIBA mark."

Slip op. at 9.

On appeal, the Federal Circuit reversed. The Court noted that though the TTAB declined to address the preclusive effect of the Second Circuit's decision, the TTAB relied exclusively on that decision to find that Cubatabaco lacked standing. The Court then explained that the Second Circuit decided only that the CACR limited the federal courts' authority to grant Cubatabaco injunctive relief, a finding that not only did not bar Cubatabaco from ever acquiring any property interest in the COHIBA mark, but also was irrelevant to the proceedings before the TTAB, where Cubatabaco had affirmative authorization to seek cancellation of the Registrations under a CACR general license. Furthermore, according to the Court, Cubatabaco had a legitimate commercial interest in the COHIBA mark. Because the TTAB had refused registration of Cubatabaco's own pending trademark application based on a likelihood of confusion with General Cigar's Registrations, the Court held that Cubatabaco had a statutory cause of action under the Lanham Act to seek cancellation of the Registrations.

The Court separately addressed General Cigar's issue and claim preclusion arguments. As a preliminary matter, the Court held that it had authority to resolve these questions of law for the first time on appeal since they were fully briefed by the parties based on an extensive record. The Court then held that neither issue nor claim preclusion barred any of the grounds for which Cubatabaco sought cancellation of the Registrations. Regarding issue preclusion, the Court concluded that, at a minimum, the issues that Cubatabaco raised were not addressed by, or necessary to, the Second Circuit's final judgment. Regarding claim preclusion, the Court explained that the Second Circuit never issued a final decision on cancellation and that the transactional facts differed in Cubatabaco's cancellation proceedings before the TTAB.

The Federal Circuit thus vacated the TTAB's SJ decision, holding that Cubatabaco had a cause of action to seek cancellation of the Registrations that was not barred by issue or claim preclusion, and remanding for further proceedings consistent with its opinion.

Judges: Rader (author), Taranto, Hughes

[Appealed from TTAB]

This article previously appeared in Last Month at the Federal Circuit, July 2014.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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---- Index References ----

Company: EMBRAER SA; CULBRO CORP; AXION POWER INTERNATIONAL INC

News Subject: (Judicial Cases & Rulings (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Technology Law (1TE30); Trademarks (1TR15); Smoking (1SM71))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (U.S. Mid-Atlantic Region (1MI18); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); USA (1US73); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15); Americas (1AM92); Cuba (1CU43))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (Garrett & Dunner LLP) (Rader)

Keywords: (Intellectual Property); (Trademark)

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June 4, 2014

U.S. trademark lawsuit over Cuban Cohiba cigars gets puff of life

Pamela MacLean

(Reuters) - The Cuban maker of world-famous Cohiba cigars has won reinstatement of a 17-year-long legal battle seeking to end the U.S. trademark registration of Cohibas made in the Dominican Republic.

The Federal Circuit Court of Appeals Wednesday overturned the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board's summary judgment from a 2011 holding that the Cuban Empresa Cubana del Tabaco, known as Cubatabaco, lacked legal standing to seek cancellation of the trademark registration for Cohibas held by General Cigar Co Inc.

"Cubatabaco has a legitimate commercial interest in the Cohiba mark," the Federal Circuit panel said.

Both Cubatabaco and General Cigar, a subsidiary of Scandinavian Tobacco Group, make cigars with the name Cohiba. The Dominican version was registered in the United States in 1981.

Under the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR), Cubatabaco is prohibited from selling its cigars in the United States, although it does allow for limited registration or renewal of trademarks, according to the court.

In 1997, Cubatabaco, which holds a license for the Cohiba mark in Cuba, attempted to register the name for its cigars in the United States but was refused because it would create a likelihood of confusion with the Dominican version, according to the court.

Within weeks Cubatabaco sued General Cigar for trademark infringement in the U.S. Southern District of New York. In 2002 the court decided that General Cigar had abandoned its Cohiba mark during five years of non-use from 1987 to 1992.

That began a series of appeals to the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that included a 2004 ruling that to give Cubatabaco the injunction it sought against General Cigar would violate the CACR by, in essence, transferring a property to a Cuban business, Cubatabaco.

In 2008, the 2nd Circuit said the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board could decide the issue of cancellation of General Cigar's registration. Proceedings before the board had been suspended while the federal trademark case and its appeals were pending.

By 2011, when the case resumed before the USPTO, the board held that Cubatabaco lacked standing to sue because its trademark application had been denied back in 1997.

The Federal Circuit said Wednesday that because the USPTO had refused Cubatabaco's registration based on a likelihood of confusion with General Cigar's Cohiba name, Cubatabaco had a real interest in cancelling the registrations and a reasonable belief that the registrations blocking its application were causing it damage.

"Cubatabaco therefore has a cause of action under the Lanham Act to seek cancellation of the registrations," the court said.

Andrew Deutsch, attorney for General Cigar said, "We have just received the decision and have not had a chance to review it, so the company has no comment at this time."

Representatives for Cubatabaco did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Federal Circuit ordered the board to reconsider the case based on Wednesday's ruling.

The case is Empresa Cubana del Tabaco v. General Cigar, U.S. Federal Circuit Court of Appeal, No. 13-1465.

For Cubatabaco: David Goldstein and Michael Krinsky of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman.

For General Cigar: Andrew Deutsch and Airina Rodrigues of DLA Piper.

--- Index References ---

Company: CULBRO CORP; COHIBA MINERALS LTD; EMBRAER SA; SCANDINAVIAN TOBACCO GROUP AS

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Trademarks (1TR15); Business Management (1BU42); Smoking (1SM71); Corporate Events (1CR05); Business Litigation (1BU04); Judicial Cases & Rulings (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Business Lawsuits & Settlements (1BU19))

Industry: (Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Latin America (1LA15); Dominican Republic (1DO49); Cuba (1CU43); North America (1NO39); Caribbean (1CA06); Americas (1AM92))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (Airina Rodrigues; Desmond Boylan; Michael Krinsky; Andrew Deutsch; David Goldstein)

Keywords: ip (MCC:a); (N2:US); (N2:AMERS); (N2:USA); (MCCL:OVR)

Word Count: 559

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April 2, 2013

Cuba accuses U.S. of backing illegal use of cigar trademark

HAVANA, Apr 01, 2013 (Xinhua via COMTEX News Network) -- Cuba has accused the United States of backing the "outright theft" of a Cuban cigar trademark as part of its 50-year embargo against the Caribbean island, the official website Cubadebate said Monday.

The accusation was filed after a U.S. federal commission ruled last week that the U.S. company General Cigar can continue to use the Cohiba brand name to market its cigars in the United States.

"It is the most recent verdict in an almost 16-year legal battle between both cigar companies over that brand, which belongs to Cuba," Cubadebate said.

In 2009, Cuba's state-owned cigar maker Cubatabaco, a partner with the French-Spanish firm Altadis, won a lawsuit against the U.S. company for using the Cohiba brand inside the United States, but General Cigar appealed against that ruling.

The U.S. Trials and Appeals Committee on Trademarks ruled that since Cubatabaco cannot sell its cigars in the United States due to the U.S. economic sanctions against Cuba, the Cuban firm cannot litigate its case there, Cubadebate reported.

---- Index References ----

Company: CUBATABACO; COMTEX NEWS NETWORK INC; ALTADIS SA

News Subject: (Smoking (1SM71))

Industry: (Electronics (1EL16); Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (North America (1NO39); Asia (1AS61); Caribbean (1CA06); Cuba (1CU43); Latin America (1LA15); Americas (1AM92))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (GENERAL CIGAR)

Keywords: cuba; embargo; lawsuit; legal; market

Word Count: 181

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April 1, 2013

Cuba says U.S. gov't enabling theft of Cuban brands.

Havana, Apr 1, 2013 (EFE via COMTEX) -- Cuba accused the U.S. of enabling the "blatant robbery" of brand names from the island following a new court verdict in a lawsuit between the Cubatabaco company and U.S.-based General Cigar Co. Inc. over the name of Cohiba cigars.

"The blatant robbery of Cuban trademarks in the United States continues to be protected by federal authorities hiding behind the spurious regulations of the economic, financial and commercial embargo that Washington wages against Cuba," the official Web site Cubadebate said Monday.

Havana's accusations come after the U.S. Trademark Trial and Appeal Board decided last week that General Cigar may continue using the Cohiba brand name to market its cigars in the United States.

"It is the most recent decision in a legal battle that has gone on for almost 16 years with the Cuban national cigar company over that Cuban brand," Cubadebate said.

In 2009, the state company Cubatabaco won a lawsuit against General Cigar for using and marketing the cigar brand Cohiba in U.S. territory.

The verdict was appealed by General Cigar, which in 1992 began selling cigars produced in the Dominican Republic under the Cohiba trademark.

Cuban-made Cohibas have been barred from the U.S. market since 1962.

Cubadebate said the Trademark Board decided this time that since Cubatabaco may not sell its cigars in U.S. territory due to the embargo, it lacks legal standing to claim the registered Cohiba brand.

"Under similar spurious pretexts, federal courts in the United States have enabled the robbery of the famous brand of Cuban rum, Havana Club, by the Bacardi company," Cubadebate said. EFE

arj/cd

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---- Index References ----

Company: CUBATABACO; CULBRO CORP; CUBATABACO

News Subject: (Sales & Marketing (1MA51); Economics & Trade (1EC26); Social Issues (1SO05); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Trademarks (1TR15); Crime (1CR87); Business Management (1BU42); Smoking (1SM71); Property Crime (1PR85))

Industry: (Advertising (1AD82); Branding & Naming (1BR12); Cigars (1CI03); Advertising & Public Relations (1AD83); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Caribbean (1CA06); Cuba (1CU43); Americas (1AM92))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (Cuba)

Keywords: (News, opinion and commentary); (Trademark Programs); (Theft); (Trademarks); (Theft)

Company Terms: CUBATABACO

Product: Regulation, Licensing, and Inspection of Miscellaneous Commercial Sectors; Police Protection

Naics Code: 92615; 92212

Word Count: 280

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3/30/13 Richmond Times-Dispatch (Pg. Unavail. Online)
2013 WLNR 7816238

Richmond Times Dispatch (VA)
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March 30, 2013

Section: News

Virginia business briefs for March 30

Staff Writer

Board says cigar maker can use Cohiba name

A federal panel says General Cigar Co. Inc. can continue using the Cohiba trademark on its cigars in the U.S.

The ruling is the latest in the nearly 16-year legal battle with Cuba's state-run cigar company over the signature Cuban brand.

The Richmond-based subsidiary of Swedish Match AB said Thursday that the U.S. Trademark Trial and Appeal Board dismissed Cubatabaco's petition asking it to cancel the company's trademark.

The panel ruled that because courts have held Cubatabaco can't sell its cigars in the U.S, it has no standing to challenge the Cohiba trademark here.

General Cigar said it has sold its Dominican Cohiba cigar in the U.S. since the early 1980s. It received its first registration of the U.S. trademark in 1981.

Three new cell sites expand nTelos' coverage

The wireless company nTelos has expanded coverage of its high-speed network by activating three new cell sites in the greater Richmond area.

The new areas are:

- City of Richmond: Along West Main Street and West Cary Street including the Virginia Commonwealth University campus and the Fan District.
- New Kent County: Along Route 60 through the Kent Lake, Mountcastle and Old Forge Pond areas, as well as the Five Lakes neighborhood.
- South Chesterfield: Along River Road and the surrounding neighborhoods of Chesdin Ridge and Grayson Estates.

Dominion schedules layoffs at Wis. plant

Layoffs from the shutdown of the Kewaunee Power Station in eastern Wisconsin are scheduled to start at the end of May.

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development says it received notice that a series of layoffs at the nuclear plant will begin May 31. About 635 workers will lose their jobs.

Dominion Resources Inc. has said it will proceed with plans to close and decommission the plant. The Richmond-based energy provider hasn't been able to find a buyer for the plant.

Smithfield reportedly explores splitting up

Smithfield Foods Inc., the nation's largest hog producer and processor, recently hired investment banking giant Goldman Sachs to explore the possibility of dividing into three companies, Reuters reported recently in a story that cited anonymous sources.

Company officials did not respond to requests for comment.

From staff and wire reports

More briefs, Page D3

---- Index References ----

Company: GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC (THE); NTELOS HOLDINGS CORP; CULBRO CORP; BOOMERANG SYSTEMS INC; SWEDISH MATCH AB; SMITHFIELD FOODS INC

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Trademarks (1TR15); Smoking (1SM71); Labor Relations (1LA21); Layoffs (1LA48); HR & Labor Management (1HR87); Business Management (1BU42); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Nuclear Electric Power (1NU69); Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Energy & Fuel (1EN13); Electric Utilities (1EL82); Utilities (1UT12); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); USA (1US73); North America (1NO39); U.S. Midwest Region (1MI19); Wisconsin (1WI54))

Language: EN

Word Count: 378

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2013 WLNR 7756499

Tampa Bay Times (FL)
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March 29, 2013

Section: LOCAL

BEYOND TAMPA BAY

JOURNEY arrived on top at the Game Developers Choice Awards. The artsy video game developed by Thatgamecompany swept the 13th annual ceremony Wednesday with six wins, including game of the year and the innovation award. Journey was also honored for best audio, game design, visual arts and as best downloadable game. The wordless but emotional downloadable PlayStation 3 game casts players as a mysterious scarfed figure that must trek across a desert, through temples and toward a towering mountain.

* * *

A FEDERAL PANEL has ruled that General Cigar Co. can continue using the Cohiba trademark on its cigars in the U.S. The ruling is the latest in the nearly 16-year-old legal battle with Cuba's state-run cigar company over the signature Cuban cigar brand. The panel ruled that because courts have held Cubatabaco can't sell their cigars in the U.S., it has no standing to challenge the Cohiba trademark in this country. General Cigar says it has sold its Dominican Cohiba cigars in the U.S. since the early 1980s.

* * *

BLACKBERRY posted a surprise profit of \$98 million in its fiscal fourth quarter, reversing a loss of \$125 million a year earlier, and revealed it sold 1 million Z10 smartphones, which was more than what analysts were expecting. The Z10 launched in the U.S. with AT&T last week. Earlier this week, the Z10 began selling from T-Mobile, and it launched Thursday with Verizon. The sales that are included come from Britain, Canada and other markets, where the Z10 phone sold for about a month before the quarter ended.

* * *

INTERNET SEARCH LEADER GOOGLE is taking another step beyond information retrieval into grocery delivery. The new service, called Google Shopping Express, will initially provide same-day delivery of food and other products bought online by a small group of consumers in San Francisco and suburbs located south of the city. If the pilot program goes well, Google says it will expand delivery service to other markets. Rivals Amazon.com, eBay and a few other retailers already offer same-day grocery delivery.

* * *

"I've been in the industry for 18 years, and this is the first time that I have hope for this business."

UNITED AIRLINES CEO JEFF SMISEK, saying he thinks the airline business is transforming into a profitable industry, thanks to fewer flights and higher fares

* * *

THE BOTTOM LINE: AT&T to start taking advance orders for Samsung Galaxy S4, the season's most eagerly awaited smartphone, on April 16 for \$250 ... Amazon agrees to buy book recommendations site Goodreads, which has 16 million members, for an undisclosed sum

---- Index References ----

Company: GOOGLE INC; AMAZON COM INC; AT&T INC; VERIZON COMMUNICATIONS INC; T MOBILE SERVICES SRL; EBAY INC; SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS CO LTD; UNITED AIR LINES INC; GOODREADS INC; GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

News Subject: (Smoking (1SM71))

Industry: (Internet Technology (1IN39); Electronics (1EL16); Mobile Phones & Pagers (1WI07); Palmtop Computing (1PA77); Search Engines (1SE87); Internet (1IN27); Telecom Consumer Equipment (1TE03); I.T. (1IT96); Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Consumer Electronics (1CO61); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Caribbean (1CA06); Florida (1FL79); Cuba (1CU43); Latin America (1LA15); U.S. Southeast Region (1SO88); North America (1NO39); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (GENERAL CIGAR CO) (Jeff Smisek)

Edition: 4 STATE / SUNCOAST

Word Count: 426

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NewsRoom

3/28/13 Bus. Wire 13:08:00

Business Wire
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March 28, 2013

General Cigar Prevails over Cubatabaco in Trademark Dispute

Business Editors/Retail Writers

RICHMOND, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--March 28, 2013--General Cigar was recently vindicated by the courts again in the nearly 16 year old legal battle waged by Cubatabaco to determine rightful ownership of the Cohiba® trademark in the United States. After losing its legal battle in the Second Circuit, Cubatabaco continued to exhaust all available legal channels by bringing this matter before the United States Trademark Trial and Appeal Board ("TTAB").

The TTAB granted General Cigar's motion for summary judgment, and dismissed with prejudice Cubatabaco's petition to cancel General Cigar's Cohiba registrations. The TTAB ruled that because the federal courts have held that Cubatabaco may not sell Cohiba cigars in the U.S. or acquire any interest in the Cohiba mark, Cubatabaco lacks any property interest in the Cohiba mark. Cubatabaco therefore has no standing to challenge General Cigar's registrations of the Cohiba mark.

General Cigar's President Dan Carr said, "This ruling once again affirms what we have believed all along: That Cubatabaco has no merit in challenging General Cigar's ownership of the Cohiba trademark in the United States."

General Cigar received its first registration of the Cohiba trademark in the U.S. in 1981, and again in 1992. The company has sold its Dominican Cohiba cigar in the U.S. since the early 1980s.

About Cohiba Cigars

True cigar connoisseurs recognize Dominican Cohiba cigars as one of the finest brands available in the U.S. market. Critically acclaimed for their meticulous construction and refined taste, the core brand of Cohiba cigars is complemented by these premium collections: Cohiba Black, Cohiba Puro Dominicana and Cohiba XV.

General Cigar Co. Inc., a division of Scandinavian Tobacco Group, manufactures and markets handcrafted cigars for the premium market. Committed to delivering cigars of the finest quality, General Cigar's skilled artisans produce Macanudo®, Cohiba, Partagas®, La Gloria Cubana®, Punch®, CAO, Hoyo de Monterrey®, Excalibur® and several other leading premium brands in the company's Dominican, Honduran and Nicaraguan factories. In addition, the company cultivates proprietary tobacco which is used exclusively in its blends. General Cigar also operates Club Macanudo®, a cigar bar in New York City. Based in Richmond, VA, General Cigar sells through tobacconists nationwide and also exports select products to 62 countries. For more information, please visit www.cigarworld.com.

® Cohiba, Macanudo, Partagas, La Gloria Cubana, Punch, Hoyo de Monterrey, Excalibur, and Club Macanudo are registered trademarks of General Cigar Company.

General Cigar Co.
Victoria McKee, 732-721-0317
vmckee@gcigar.com

State Keywords: Florida; Virginia
Industry Keywords: Luxury; Professional Services; Legal; Retail; Tobacco; Consumer; Hispanic
Source: General Cigar

--- Index References ---

Company: CULBRO CORP; SCANDINAVIAN TOBACCO GROUP AS

News Subject: (Trademarks (1TR15); Economics & Trade (1EC26); Business Management (1BU42); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Drug Addiction (1DR84); Health & Family (1HE30); Smoking (1SM71); Sales & Marketing (1MA51))

Industry: (Advertising & Public Relations (1AD83); Branding & Naming (1BR12); Tobacco (1TO65); Advertising (1AD82); Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62))

Region: (North America (1NO39); Americas (1AM92))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (Gloria Cubana; Hoyo; Dan Carr) (North America; Central America; Caribbean)

Keywords: Luxury; Florida; Professional Services; Legal; Retail; Tobacco; Virginia; Consumer; Hispanic (Advisory); (Lawsuit)

Word Count: 423

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NewsRoom

NewsRoom

3/28/13 Can. Press 00:00:00

Canadian Press
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March 28, 2013

Panel: General Cigar can continue using Cohiba trademark in the US, despite Cuban challenge

RICHMOND, Va. _ A federal panel says General Cigar Co. Inc. can continue using the Cohiba (co-HEE-ba) trademark on its cigars in the U.S.

The ruling is the latest in the nearly 16-year-old legal battle with Cuba's state-run cigar company over the signature Cuban cigar brand.

The Richmond, Va.-based subsidiary of Swedish Match AB said Thursday that the U.S. Trademark Trial and Appeal Board dismissed Cubatabaco's petition asking it to cancel the company's trademark.

The panel ruled that because courts have held Cubatabaco can't sell their cigars in the U.S, it has no standing to challenge the Cohiba trademark in the country.

General Cigar says it has sold its Dominican Cohiba cigar in the U.S. since the early 1980s. It received its first registration of the Cohiba trademark in the U.S. in 1981.

--- Index References ---

Company: CULBRO CORP; SWEDISH MATCH AB

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Smoking (1SM71); Health & Family (1HE30); Trademarks (1TR15); Economics & Trade (1EC26); Drug Addiction (1DR84))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (U.S. Southeast Region (1SO88); Latin America (1LA15); Virginia (1VI57); North America (1NO39); Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Caribbean (1CA06); Americas (1AM92))

Language: EN

Keywords: (B); (BUSINESS)

Word Count: 144

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NewsRoom

NewsRoom

12/1/11 Cuba News 10
2011 WLNR 27107198

Cuba News
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December 1, 2011

Volume 19; Issue 12

Dominican cigar brand fights Cuba in U.S. trademark suit.

Echevarria, Vito

Washington's 50-year-old embargo against Cuba, which bans the sale of Cuban cigars in the United States, has been an undisputed bonanza for the neighboring Dominican Republic.

That country's second-largest city, Santiago de los Caballeros, produces the bulk of premium Dominican stogies and employs more than 14,000 people. Last year, exports of those cigars to the U.S. and European market generated \$445.4 million, up from \$334.1 million in 2005, according to the D.R. Central Bank.

But one Santiago-based brand--"Pinar del Rio"--is infuriating the Castro regime.

Dominican cigar makers Abe Flores and Juan E. Rodriguez, who produce Pinar del Rio cigars in nearby Tamboril, registered the PDR trademark with U.S. authorities in 2008, and has since marketed cigars in several U.S. states from the PDR office in New Orleans.

However, Cuban cigar producers Habanos SA and state-run Cubatabaco don't want Dominican brands with Cuban-sounding names being sold in the United States. (Habanos is a 50-50 venture between Cubatabaco and Altadis, a Spanish company owned by Imperial Tobacco Group PLC.)

This is why--even though Cuba can't enter that market--Cubatabaco secured a license in 2010 with the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control specifically to challenge the PDR trademark. The OFAC license was also needed to authorize payment to Cubatabaco's New York-based attorney, David Goldstein.

Instead of going directly to a federal district court, however, Goldstein filed his lawsuit with the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB).

The publication INTA Bulletin reported in its November 2011 edition that Habanos and Cubatabaco initiated proceedings through the TTAB to cancel PDR's U.S. trademark "on grounds of descriptiveness, geographically deceptive descriptiveness, violation of the Pan American Convention of 1929 and fraud."

In response, PDR's Rodriguez filed a motion to dismiss the suit, alleging that neither Habanos nor Cubatabaco had asserted trademark rights for the Pinar del Rio brand or similarly named competing marks in the U.S.

"There has never been a [cigar] brand called 'Pinar del Rio' [in Cuba]," Rodriguez told CubaNews. "We're Dominican, not Cuban exiles." Rodriguez asserts that Pinar del Rio is not a geographic location found exclusively in Cuba, pointing out that "there's a Pinar del Rio in the Dominican Republic, Brazil and other Latin countries."

Rodriguez also ridiculed the idea that the Cubans can force his or any other non-Cuban cigar label out of business strictly because they give their label a geographic name--even one associated with Cuba.

Referring to the city of Santiago--a geographic name also associated with the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Chile--he said Cuba trying to cancel his trademark is like going after another cigarmaker whose label happens to be "Santiago."

Nevertheless, the TTAB ruled against PDR in August, noting that the Cuban cigarmakers had standing after all--meaning that they can proceed with pursuing the cancellation of PDR's trademark registration.

The judges deciding that case ruled that under Sections 2(a) and 2(e) of the U.S. Trademark Act, a property interest in a trademark was not needed to show standing "where a trademark sought to be cancelled is deceptive or primarily geographically deceptively mis-descriptive.

They added that "a petitioner challenging the registration need not, to establish standing, own a pending application for the mark or be using the term as a mark or otherwise."

The fact that Rodriguez used the geographic name of Cuba's top cigar-producing province to sell his smokes was enough to convince U.S. trademark law judges to green light the Cubans' legal proceeding to have the PDR trademark cancelled, as opposed to having it summarily dismissed.

The TTAB still has to decide the case on the merits, meaning that PDR will eventually have to fight for its very survival in the U.S. cigar market through its attorney.

Neither Habanos officials nor the New York attorney, Goldstein, would discuss the lawsuit with CubaNews.

Frank Herrera, PDR's Florida-based attorney, has built a reputation over the years defending various non-Cuban cigar labels against legal actions launched by the Cubans.

"Some years back, the Cubans thought that the embargo would be lifted," Herrera told us. "They realized that the significance of the 'Habano' name, for example, was being diluted, since non-Cuban cigars were getting more popular in the United States. People actually prefer non-Cuban over Cuban cigars.

"They [the Cubans] looked at every registration that looked or smelled like Cuba, so they decided to oppose those certification marks in the U.S.," he continued.

"They dedicated millions of dollars to legal actions. Most of their battles have been with small labels. So rather than fight, [these small non-Cuban brands] would just abandon or default. Fortunately, they have not won the cases that I have taken up. They have applied for a certification mark for 'Habano,' for example, and have been denied."

So why are the Cubans pursuing their legal actions through the TTAB?

"It's cheap, it's easy, and they have all their forms in place," Herrera suggested. "Also, the federal courts don't have to hear trademark cases where there are no actual damages." [This applies to Cuban cigarmakers, since they cannot sell their smokes in the States.]

Herrera warned that if the Cubans prevail against PDR, they'll use that victory as precedent in lawsuits against other non-Cuban cigar labels in the future.

There's another reason Cuba is turning to the TTAB: its negative experience with the federal courts. American cigar aficionados will recall that General Cigar Co. first registered the "Cohiba" name in 1978 and began selling its own Dominican-made cigars under that brand in the U.S. market in the 1980s.

These Dominican Cohibas enjoyed brisk sales in the late '90s, and were known for their distinctive label--a red dot in the middle of the letter "O" in Cohiba. That led Cubatabaco to sue General Cigar in federal court. A 2009 ruling by the Southern District of New York granted Cubatabaco's request for a permanent injunction blocking General Cigar from using the Cohiba trademark on its smokes, but a year later, that decision was overturned by the 2nd Circuit Court.

Earlier this year, the Emory International Law Review explained that the federal courts rendered moot whatever trademark rights Cubatabaco may have on the Cohiba name, because enforcement of such rights would still be barred by the U.S. embargo.

---- Index References ----

Language: ES

Other Indexing: (Cuba)

Keywords: (General interest); (News, opinion and commentary); (Tobacco); (Tobacco Products); (Trademark Programs); (International economic relations); (Patents & copyrights); (Tobacco industry); (Tobacco industry - International economic relations); (Tobacco industry - Intellectual property); (Cuban foreign relations); (Trademarks)

Product: Tobacco; Cigars; Tobacco, Chewing & Snuff; Tobacco Stemming & Redrying; Tobacco Farming; Tobacco Manufacturing; Regulation, Licensing, and Inspection of Miscellaneous Commercial Sectors

Sic: 0132; 2121; 2131; 2141

Naics Code: 11191; 3122; 92615

Word Count: 1060

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9/1/10 Caribbean Update 8
2010 WLNR 17144247

Caribbean Update
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September 1, 2010

Volume 26; Issue 9

Dr Cohibas win in court.

DR COHIBAS WIN IN COURT. A Manhattan appeals court has ruled in favor of General Cigar Co. in its 13-year fight with Cuba over the Cohiba brand, reports Cigar Aficionado online (July 16, 2010). General Cigar Co. maintains that it is the rightful owner of Cohiba in the US. General Cigar manufactures the Cohibas in Santiago, DR. The July 14 ruling by the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reverses a 2009 decision by Second District Court Judge Robert W. Sweet who had ruled in favor of Cubatabaco, the state-owned entity that owns all of Cuba's cigar brands. In the 2009 decision, Judge Sweet said General Cigar Co.

had made its Dominican Cohiba "in order to exploit the reputation and goodwill of the Cuban Cohiba," and enjoined the company to stop selling the product. But the July 14 ruling, issued by circuit judges Reena Raggi, Gerard E. Lynch and Denny Chin, stated: "We have considered Cubatabaco's other arguments on appeal and conclude they are without merit."

---- Index References ----

Company: MANHATTAN BANCORP; GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; US COURT OF APPEALS

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Smoking (1SM71); Judicial (1JU36); Regulatory Affairs (1RE51))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Caribbean (1CA06); North America (1NO39); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIGAR CO; COURT; DOMINICAN COHIBA; GENERAL CIGAR CO; MANHATTAN; US COURT OF APPEALS) (Cigar; Cigar Aficionado; Cohibas; COHIBAS WIN; Denny Chin; DR; Gerard E. Lynch; Reena Raggi; Robert W. Sweet; Sweet)

Keywords: (Business); (Business, regional); (Economics); (Tobacco industry)

Company Terms: GENERAL CIGAR CO

Word Count: 165

NewsRoom

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7/22/10 ENP Newswire 00:00:00

ENP Newswire
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July 22, 2010

DLA Piper successfully represents General Cigar in trademark infringement case; Decision Reverses Previous Ruling in Favor of Cuban State Corporation...

DLA Piper successfully represents General Cigar in trademark infringement case; Decision Reverses Previous Ruling in Favor of Cuban State Corporation Cubatabaco, Reaffirms General Cigar's Rights to Sell Popular Cohiba-Branded Cigars in the United States.

ENPNewswire-22 July 2010-DLA Piper successfully represents General Cigar in trademark infringement case; Decision Reverses Previous Ruling in Favor of Cuban State Corporation Cubatabaco, Reaffirms General Cigar's Rights to Sell Popular Cohiba-Branded Cigars in the United States(C)2010 ENPublishing - <http://www.enpublishing.co.uk>

Release date- 21072010 - DLA Piper announced today that it successfully obtained reversal by the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit of a 2009 district court decision that had prohibited General Cigar Co., Inc. and General Cigar Holdings, Inc. from selling Cohiba cigars in the United States.

The July 14 ruling is a significant victory for General Cigar, as it restores General Cigar's exclusive right to market and sell Cohiba brand cigars in the United States.

'The Second Circuit's reversal of the injunction that prohibited General Cigar from using the Cohiba mark reaffirms the company's exclusive rights to the Cohiba cigar brand in the US,' said Andrew L. Deutsch, lead counsel and partner in DLA Piper's Intellectual Property and Technology practice in the New York office. 'General Cigar's Cohiba brand cigar is very popular among cigar enthusiasts, and General Cigar regards the outcome as a tremendous victory. We are extremely proud of our team's hard work to obtain a favorable decision on our client's behalf.'

In 1997, the Cuban state tobacco monopoly, known as Cubatabaco, sued General Cigar, claiming that the company's sale of the Cohiba brand cigar in the United States was federal trademark infringement and state law unfair competition. In 2004, the US District Court for the Southern District of New York dismissed the state claim, but upheld Cubatabaco's federal claims, and prohibited General Cigar from selling Cohiba cigars in the United States. In 2005, the Second Circuit affirmed the District Court's decision on state law, but reversed its finding of federal trademark infringement and vacated the injunction, allowing General Cigar's continued sale of the Cohiba brand. The US Supreme Court refused to hear Cubatabaco's appeal.

However, in 2008, Cubatabaco moved to reopen the 2004 judgment on the grounds that New York unfair competition law had changed since the 2005 decision, and that it was now entitled to judgment on the unfair competition claim. The District Court granted this motion, awarded Cubatabaco judgment on its state claim, and ordered another injunction that once again prohibited General Cigar's sale of Cohiba cigars domestically. The Second Circuit reversed, finding that

the District Court had abused its discretion in ruling for Cubatabaco. It held that New York law had not changed, and that there were no extraordinary circumstances to justify reopening the 2004 judgment.

In addition to Deutsch, the DLA Piper team representing General Cigar included Joshua S. Sohn, a partner in the firm's New York office and Airina L. Rodrigues, an associate also in the firm's New York office.

About the Intellectual Property and Technology Practice

DLA Piper's Intellectual Property and Technology practice offers clients comprehensive IP services, including patent, trademark, copyright litigation, patent prosecution, IP due diligence and strategic IP asset management. The firm has nearly 400 IP attorneys in 48 cities and 22 countries which ranks the group among the largest IP practices in the world. DLA Piper's Patent Litigation practice in the US

alone includes more than 80 lawyers.

CONTACTS:

Laura Miller, Media Relations, Greentarget Global Group, 312.252.4104

Kristen Griffin, Media Relations, Greentarget Global Group, 312.252.4107

[Editorial queries for this story should be sent to newswire@enpublishing.co.uk]

((Distributed via M2 Communications - <http://www.m2.com>))

--- Index References ---

Company: INVESTIDOR PROFISSIONAL GESTAO DE RECURSOS LDA; IP; DLA PIPER GROUP; DLA PIPER RUDNICK GRAY CARY; GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; US COURT OF APPEALS

News Subject: (Information Technology Crime (1IN42); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Legal (1LE33); Copyright (1CO88); Judicial (1JU36); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26); Corporate & Business Law (1XO58); Corporate Legal Management (1XO33); Corporate Events (1CR05); Technology Law (1TE30); Business Management (1BU42); Regulatory Affairs (1RE51); Business Lawsuits & Settlements (1BU19))

Industry: (Insurance (1IN97); Tobacco (1TO65); Financial Services Regulatory (1FI03); Insurance Products (1IN13); Press Releases (1PR19); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Insurance Regulatory (1IN40); Financial Services (1FI37); Insurance Industry Legal Issues (1IN64); Cigars (1CI03); Security (1SE29); Intellectual Property Insurance (1IN22))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Caribbean (1CA06); New York (1NE72); Americas (1AM92); USA (1US73); U.S. Mid-Atlantic Region (1MI18); North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIGAR CO INC; CONTACTS; COURT; CUBAN STATE CORP; CUBAN STATE CORPORATION CUBATABACO; CUBATABACO; DECISION REVERSES PREVIOUS RULING; DISTRICT COURT; DLA PIPER; GREENTARGET GLOBAL GROUP; IP; PATENT LITIGATION; REVERSES PREVIOUS RULING; US COURT OF APPEALS; US SUPREME COURT) (Airina L. Rodrigues; Andrew L.

Deutsch; Cigar; Cigar Holdings; Cigars; Cohiba; Cohiba-Branded Cigars; Deutsch; ENPNewswire; Joshua S. Sohn; Kristen Griffin; Laura Miller; Reaffirms; Release)

Keywords: (Tobacco industry)

Company Terms: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

Ticker Symbol: MPP

Word Count: 597

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NewsRoom

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7/1/10 Cuba News 19
2010 WLNR 25384380

Cuba News
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July 1, 2010

Volume 18; Issue 7

D.R. Cohibas in court case involving Cuba.

A New York appeals court has ruled in favor of General Cigar Co. in its 13-year fight with Cuba over the Cohiba brand, reported Cigar Aficionado in its latest online edition.

General Cigar maintains that it is the rightful owner of Cohiba in the United States. It manufactures Cohibas at a factory in Santiago, Dominican Republic.

The Jul. 14 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reverses a 2009 decision by District Court Judge Robert Sweet who had ruled in favor of Cubatabaco, the state entity that owns Cuba's cigar brands.

In his 2009 ruling, Sweet said General Cigar had made its Dominican Cohiba "in order to exploit the reputation and goodwill of the Cuban Cohiba," and enjoined the company to stop selling the product.

But the latest ruling, issued by circuit judges Reena Raggi, Gerard E. Lynch and Denny Chin, stated: "We have considered Cubatabaco's other arguments on appeal and conclude they are without merit."

---- Index References ----

Language: ES

Keywords: (General interest); (News, opinion and commentary); (Government Enterprises-Total Govt); (Public enterprises); (Government business enterprises)

Product: All Other General Government

Naics Code: 92119

Word Count: 160

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7/29/09 Miami Herald (Pg. Unavail. Online)

2009 WLNR 14574909

Miami Herald (FL)

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July 29, 2009

CUBA | WRONGFUL DEATH: Cuban trademarks targeted in family's fight for compensation

A legal showdown looms over Cuban trademarks such as Havana Club rum as a Dade family seeks cash for their wrongful-death judgment against the Castro...

JAY WEAVER

jweaver@MiamiHerald.com

A legal showdown looms over Cuban trademarks such as Havana Club rum as a Dade family seeks cash for their wrongful-death judgment against the Castro government.

Havana Club rum and Cohiba cigars -- could be sold to the highest bidder if a Miami-Dade family who lost a loved one to Castro's firing squad prevails in court.

Relatives of the late Bobby Fuller , who won a \$100 million wrongful-death judgment against the Cuban government, urged a Miami-Dade circuit judge Tuesday to order the sale of Havana Club, Cohiba and 12 other Cuban trademarks to help satisfy their award.

Their legal move will spark a sure-fire controversy, because litigation over Cuban trademarks registered in the United States since the 1963 trade embargo against Cuba has been especially hot over the past decade -- particularly involving Havana Club rum.

The Fuller family's lawyers, Roberto Martinez and Karen O. Stewart , are urging the judge to bring three Cuban entities into court to establish their ownership of the 14 trademarks. The Cuban companies are Cubatabaco, which holds 12 of the trademarks, including Cohiba, Esplendidos and La Perla; Cubaexport, which owns the Havana Club mark; and ETECSA, the Cuban phone monopoly that owns the Calls2Cuba mark.

The lawyers want Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Thomas S. Wilson Jr. to order the Cuban companies to attend a "show-cause" hearing to explain why their trademarks should not be auctioned at a "public sale to the highest bidder" to help satisfy the family's judgment, according to court papers filed Tuesday.

The aging siblings of Bobby Fuller , executed in 1960 after a botched invasion of Cuba, argue that a 2002 U.S. law benefiting victims of terrorism gives them the right to go after Cuban trademarks to help pay for the wrongful-death judgment.

The family's trademark bid comes as their lawyers separately seek to garnish from U.S.-licensed phone companies their payments of millions of dollars to Cuba for long-distance phone service between the United States and the island.

Their novel legal move in going after trademarks raises more questions than it answers.

For one thing, the value of the trademarks registered in the United States is unclear. Cuban-made products cannot be sold here. The trademarks' highest value would be based on a post-embargo marketplace – a possibility that appears closer under the Obama administration.

It is also not clear whether the three Cuban entities can claim ownership of their 14 trademarks in dispute. A 1998 U.S. law prevents Cuban trademark owners from renewing their trademarks in the United States if they were confiscated along with companies nationalized by the Cuban government.

The latest impact of that law: In March, a federal judge in Washington dismissed a lawsuit filed by Cubaexport after the United States denied the renewal of Cuba's 1976 trademark rights for Havana Club rum. The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control refused to renew Cubaexport's trademark for Havana Club in 2006.

Cubaexport is appealing. Its loss marked a victory for Bacardi U.S.A., the Puerto Rico-based distiller, which has fought hard to control the Havana Club name in the United States.

"Havana Club is not an asset of the Cuban government," Patricia M. Neal, spokeswoman for Bacardi U.S.A., said in a statement.

According to Bacardi, Havana Club was developed in 1935 by a family-owned Cuban company, Jose Arechabala, S.A. After the Cuban Revolution in 1959, Fidel Castro's government seized the family's company and trademark, and started to produce rum under the Havana Club label. Bacardi bought the original rum recipe and the Havana Club name from the Arechabala family in 1994.

The famous Cohiba brand also has been mired in legal disputes. Although most people think of Cohiba as a Cuban cigar, a stogie by the same name has been manufactured in the Dominican Republic and sold in the United States for 28 years. It is the only Cohiba that is legal to buy in the United States.

An American company, General Cigar, first registered the Cohiba name in the United States in 1981 and has successfully defended its ownership against a long-term Cuban challenge.

--- Index References ---

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Economics & Trade (1EC26); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); North America (1NO39); Caribbean (1CA06); Florida (1FL79); Latin America (1LA15); Americas (1AM92); USA (1US73))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (COHIBA; HAVANA CLUB; US TREASURY DEPARTMENT) (Arechabala; Bobby Fuller; Castro; Cigar; Cubaexport; Esplendidos and La Perla; Fidel Castro; Fuller; Jose Arechabala; Karen O. Stewart; Obama; Patricia M. Neal; Roberto Martinez; Thomas S. Wilson Jr.) (United States) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (United States) (United States) (United States) (Washington) (United States) (Puerto Rico) (United States) (Dominican Republic) (United States)

(United States) (United States) (us; usa; na; us.fl; us.fl.miami; cu; cub; do; dom; pr; pri; ca; cam; nam; us.dc; us.pr; us.dc.wshdc)

Keywords: (XC/Stockholm); (XC/Unknown); (NT/NEC); (XC/any.company); (XC/any)

Ticker Symbol: Unknown:BCD; Stockholm:SWMA

Word Count: 832

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NewsRoom

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2009 WLNR 18792815

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July 1, 2009

Volume 17; Issue 7

Cohiba cigar trademark war heats up again.

As President Barack Obama moves to ease restrictions on trade with Cuba, cigar lovers are savoring the prospect of legally lighting up a smoke that has long required a black- market connection and a willingness to flout the law. Bloomberg reported in mid-June.

"There's a mystique about a Cuban," said John Anderson, owner of W. Curtis Draper Tobacconist Inc., a cigar shop in Washington. "Cuban tobacco has become the forbidden fruit."

[ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

The possible end to the 47-year U.S. embargo on Cuba trade has intensified a legal and lobbying fight between cigar manufacturers Swedish Match AB of Stockholm and Imperial Tobacco Group Plc of Bristol, England.

Each wants exclusive rights to sell Cuban-made brands in the U.S., the world's largest market for premium cigars.

Swedish Match sells cigars in the U.S. made in Honduras and the Dominican Republic under Cuban brand names. It bought the brands from families that fled Cuba after Fidel Castro seized their cigar companies in the 1960s. Imperial distributes Cuban- made cigars under many of the same names to the rest of the world through an agreement with the Cuban state monopoly, Cubatabaco.

"Before serious commerce resumes, this will have to be resolved," Robert Muse, a Washington lawyer who advises clients on Cuba-related issues, told Bloomberg.

Opening the U.S. market to Cuban cigars may jeopardize jobs of 147 workers at the U.S. headquarters of Swedish Match's General Cigar unit in Richmond, Va., according to Gerry Roerty, the unit's general counsel.

"The market is going to be turned upside down," Roerty said in an interview. After waiting for almost five decades, Americans "will buy a Donald Duck cigar if it's a Cuban."

James Suckling, who has written articles on Cuba for Cigar Aficionado, estimates that Americans consume about 20 million Cuban cigars a year, enjoying them while traveling to Mexico or the Caribbean or stowing them in luggage on the way home.

The forbidden fruit carries a premium: A box of 25 Cohiba Robustos costs \$304 on the Hong Kong-based Cigars of Habanos Web site, where shoppers are offered the option of shipping to the U.S. without regard to the government's ban, whereas a Dominican-made version sold online by Holt's Cigar Co. of Philadelphia sells for \$175.

Swedish Match and Imperial Tobacco both sell Dominican-made cigars in the U.S. and together account for almost half of the sales in a U.S. market for premium cigars that Swedish Match puts at \$850 million annually.

Cuba lost the U.S. rights to Cohibas when General Cigar registered the brand in the 1970s. General Cigar has so far fended off a 1997 lawsuit brought by Cubatabaco to reclaim that name. A new ruling in the case may come within months.

General Cigar has spent more than \$5 million lobbying Congress since 2001. It got lawmakers to strike a provision in a 2001 measure that it says would have allowed Cuba to barter cigars for food or medicine. Imperial began lobbying this year for the first time since at least 2000, spending an initial \$30,000, according to Senate records.

---- Index References ----

Language: ES

Other Indexing: (Cuba)

Keywords: (General interest); (News, opinion and commentary); (Trademark Programs); (Patents & copyrights); (Tobacco industry); (Tobacco industry - Intellectual property); (Cuban foreign relations); (Trademarks)

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Section: Business

Cigar showdown smolders Competing Cohibas eye end of Cuban trade embargo

MARK DRAJEM

BLOOMBERG NEWS

Cohibas, Partagas and Montecristos from Cuba. For U.S. cigar aficionados, the names spark thoughts of civil disobedience.

As President Obama moves to ease restrictions on trade with Cuba, cigar lovers are savoring the prospect of legally lighting up a smoke that has long required a black-market connection and a willingness to flout the law.

"There's a mystique about a Cuban," said John Anderson, owner of W. Curtis Draper Tobacconist, a cigar shop in Washington, D.C. "Cuban tobacco has become the forbidden fruit."

The possible end to the 47-year-old embargo on Cuban trade has intensified a legal and lobbying fight between cigar makers Swedish Match of Stockholm and Imperial Tobacco Group of Bristol, England. Each wants exclusive rights to sell Cuban-made brands in the United States, the world's largest market for premium cigars.

Swedish Match sells cigars in the United States made in Honduras and the Dominican Republic under Cuban brand names. It bought the brands from families that fled Cuba after Fidel Castro seized their cigar companies in the 1960s. Imperial distributes Cuban-made cigars under many of the same names to the rest of the world through an agreement with the Cuban government monopoly, Cubatabaco.

"Before serious commerce resumes, this is going to have to be resolved," said Robert Muse, a Washington lawyer who advises clients on Cuba-related issues.

Opening the U.S. market to Cuban cigars may jeopardize the jobs of the 147 workers at the U.S. headquarters of Swedish Match's General Cigar subsidiary in Richmond, Va., according to Gerry Roerty, the unit's general counsel.

"The market is going to be turned

upside down," Roerty said in an interview. After waiting for almost five decades, Americans "will buy a Donald Duck cigar if it's a Cuban."

Obama lifted prohibitions on Cuban-Americans traveling to the island in

April and eased restrictions on shipping clothing, seeds and other gifts to Cuban residents.

Before the United States takes

further steps, Obama says Cuba needs to free political prisoners and allow

freedom of speech and religion. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Charles

Rangel (D-N.Y.) predicted last month

all travel and trade prohibitions, imposed by President Kennedy in 1962, will be lifted by the end of next year.

Cuban cigars, hand-rolled from the tobacco of the Vuelta Abajo growing region, hold a cachet in popular culture that dates to the island's days as a playground for gamblers, novelists and mobsters. The day before Kennedy imposed the embargo, he dispatched Press Secretary Pierre Salinger to buy 1,000 Cuban-made Petit Upmanns, according to an account Salinger wrote in 2002.

"A Cuban embodies so much more than smoke," said James Suckling, who has written articles on Cuba for Cigar Aficionado magazine.

He estimates Americans consume about 20 million Cuban cigars a year, enjoying them while traveling to Mexico or the Caribbean or stowing them in luggage on the way home.

The forbidden fruit carries a premium: A box of 25 Cohiba Robustos costs \$304 on the Hong Kong-based Cigars of Habanos website, where shoppers are offered the option of shipping to the United States without regard to the government's ban. A Dominican-made version sold online by Holt's Cigar of Philadelphia sells for \$175.

Because of the low acidity in the soil and a temperate climate, Cuban cigars have an earthy aroma and a "full taste" that make the best of them the finest cigars in the world, said Benjamin Menendez, a Cuban who fled the country in 1960 after Castro confiscated his family's cigar company, Menendez y Garcia.

Not all Cuban cigars meet those standards, he said.

"People are told they have a Cuban and they immediately

assume they are good," said

Menendez, who has blended

tobacco around the world and hosts 150 cigar tastings a year for General Cigar.

Swedish Match and Imperial Tobacco both sell Dominican-made cigars in the United States and together account for almost half of the sales in a U.S. market for premium cigars that is estimated at \$850 million annually.

After cigar makers fled

Cuba, Cubatabaco began exporting cigars under brands such as the Menendez family's Montecristo and H. Upmann, and developed new brands, such as Cohibas.

Because of the embargo and U.S. court decisions, Cubatabaco couldn't keep the trademarks in the United States, and General Cigar bought brands from the refugees.

Through an acquisition, Imperial owns a subsidiary that took the same stance, buying brands such as Montecristo from exiled families.

That created the divided cigar market, in which one company owns a brand such as Partagas in the United States and another does so around the world.

Cuba lost the U.S. rights to Cohibas when General Cigar registered the brand in the 1970s. General Cigar has so far fended off a 1997 lawsuit brought by Cubatabaco to reclaim that name. A new ruling in the case may come within months.

General Cigar has spent more than \$5 million lobbying Congress over the past eight years. It got lawmakers to strike a provision in a 2001 measure that it said would have allowed Cuba to barter cigars for food or medicine. Imperial began lobbying this year for the first time since at least 2000, spending an initial \$30,000, according to Senate records.

---- Index References ----

Company: PRESS; SWEDISH MATCH CORP; IMPERIAL TOBACCO GROUP PLC; MONTECRISTO

News Subject: (Economic & Trade Sanctions (1EC72); Legal (1LE33); Global Econopolitics (1GL97); Smoking (1SM71); Intellectual Freedoms & Civil Liberties (1IN08); Economics & Trade (1EC26); World Trade (1WO85); Civil Rights Law (1CI34))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Northern Europe (1NO01); Caribbean (1CA06); North America (1NO39); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Sweden (1SW65); Europe (1EU83); Scandinavia (1SC27); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15))

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Other Indexing: (CURTIS DRAPER TOBACCONIST; H UPMANN; IMPERIAL TOBACCO GROUP; MONTECRISTO; PRESS; SENATE; SWEDISH MATCH; VUELTA ABAJO) (Benjamin Menendez; Castro; Charles; Cigar; Cohibas; Competing Cohibas; Cubatabaco; Donald Duck; Fidel Castro; Gerry Roerty; Imperial; Imperial Tobacco; James Suckling; John Anderson; Kennedy; Menendez; Montecristos; Obama; Opening; Petit Upmanns; Pierre Salinger; Rangel; Robert Muse; Roerty)

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Judge rules in favor of Cuba in Cohiba lawsuit.

The Cohiba trademark case that refuses to die has just taken another turn, reports the New York-based magazine Cigar Aficionado.

Although the trademark dispute over the Cohiba brand name was dismissed in 2005, allowing General Cigar Co. to keep using the Cohiba mark in the United States, the case was reopened, and it was just overturned in light of a new legal precedent.

Cigar Aficionado reporter Gregory Mottola reported Dec. 3 that Cubatabaco--the Cuban state entity that owns Cuba's cigar trademarks--had appealed to the U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York, citing a prior Court of Appeals ruling (ITC v. Punchgini) as a basis for its claim against General Cigar, producers of the Dominican Cohiba cigar sold in the United States.

After reviewing *Empresesa Cubana del Tabaco v. Culbro Corp.* (Culbro being the former owner of General Cigar), Judge Robert Sweet found Nov. 18 that General Cigar was guilty of unfair trade by misappropriation. Furthermore, Sweet ruled that Cubatabaco was entitled to relief. General Cigar, a unit of Swedish Match AB, had no comment.

The litigation goes back 11 years since General Cigar began marketing products with the Cohiba name in 1997. Cubatabaco has attempted to block General's use of the brand name ever since, and won the first round of legal battles in 2004.

But, as Cigar Aficionado reported, when General appealed in 2005, the Second U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the U.S. embargo on Cuban goods precluded Cubatabaco from claiming any benefit of the Cohiba brand name.

It was also determined that Cubatabaco had failed to establish "bad faith," an element needed to make the claim of unfair trade by misappropriation.

Cubatabaco argued that a 2007 ruling in *ITC v. Punchgini* eliminated the "bad faith" requirement as being integral to the claim of misappropriation. Judge Sweet agreed.

Cubatabaco is seeking relief that includes General's profits on Cohiba cigar sales.

---- Index References ----

Language: ES

Keywords: (General interest); (News, opinion and commentary); (Government Enterprises-Total Govt); (Public enterprises); (Government business enterprises)

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Section: E

**BACARDI'S VICTORY IN THE HAVANA CLUB TRADEMARK FIGHT
COULD SPELL TROUBLE FOR MANY OTHER U.S. BUSINESSES**
INTRO Foreign Trade Council BY MATTHEW HAGGMAN mhaggman@MiamiHerald.com

In 1918 the Aunt Jemima trademark was registered in Cuba, and even after Fidel Castro seized power in 1959, a steady stream of U.S. companies from Ace Hardware to United Airlines has continued to register their trademarks in the island nation.

Despite the decades-long U.S. economic embargo that precludes most trade with Cuba, more than 400 U.S. companies have registered in excess of 5,000 trademarks -- everything from McDonald's Golden Arches to Nike's famed Swoosh and Pepsi. And until recently, Cuba had no problem registering and renewing trademarks in the United States.

Now some fear the recent U.S. refusal to renew the Havana Club rum trademark claimed by a Cuban joint venture and Bacardi's launch of Havana Club -- a brand it also claims -- has placed the delicate balance of respecting other nations' trademarks in jeopardy. The recent developments also raise the possibility of Cuban retaliation, experts say.

Bacardi's fight with Cubaexport, a Cuban company that partnered with French liquor giant Pernod Ricard in 1993 to sell the rum around the world, has been simmering in U.S. courts, Congress and in the World Trade Organization for a decade. But the United States' recent decision to invalidate Cubaexport's Havana Club trademark registration really fanned the flames.

"Our government has done a real injustice that will come back to bite a lot of other companies," said William A. Reinsch, president of the National Foreign Trade Council. The council, which is based in Washington, represents corporate members such as Microsoft, Wal-Mart, Caterpillar and General Motors.

BRAND PROTECTION

But Patricia Neal, a Bacardi spokeswoman, rejected the notion that the rum company's efforts endanger other companies' trademarks in Cuba.

"All companies would fight to protect their brand," she said.

On August 3 the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office said the Havana Club trademark would be "canceled/expired" -- although Cubaexport had filed its renewal application correctly with a \$500 fee and on time.

The Patent Office refused to accept the renewal after J. Robert McBrien, the acting director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, wrote the office had received guidance from the U.S. State Department "informing us that it would be inconsistent with U.S. policy."

That decision stems from a provision called Section 211 that was inserted in a 1998 budget bill. Sometimes called the "Bacardi Bill," Section 211 has been criticized as a measure solely aimed at benefiting the rum giant.

Now the recent Havana Club denial has raised concerns that Cuba could return the favor by canceling U.S. trademark registrations based on the communist nation's own "policy" considerations.

Cuba could, for instance, cancel the trademarks for Levi's jeans or Heinz ketchup and sell its version in island stores. Those products could filter into other markets, too, harming U.S. companies that have long sought to keep fakes off store shelves abroad, said the National Foreign Trade Council.

Such a scenario could force U.S. companies to spend millions defending trademarks in many different countries and make the Cuba market ever more difficult to enter if it ultimately transitions into a market economy. And some think that day may be sooner rather than later due to leader Fidel Castro's shaky health.

'Some day Cuba could say, 'The heck with it, we will not honor any of these [U.S.] registrations, because you guys are not honoring ours,' " said Jesus Sanchelima, a Miami lawyer who has represented U.S. companies in trademark cases in Cuba.

Cuba has threatened retaliation before.

In 2001, in a heated moment during Cuba's long-standing dispute with Bacardi, Castro said he had given instructions to the Cuban rum industry to begin producing Bacardi. And he threatened that other U.S. brand names could be in jeopardy. "Here we can produce Palmolive, any toothpaste."

There's no evidence that he made good on that threat but Cuba did briefly produce its own Bacardi rum after the revolution.

"This decision [on the Havana Club renewal] invites retaliation by Cuba," said Reinsch. "We have been assuming that they were waiting to see the outcome of this case before doing anything. Now that there is an outcome, they will probably come to a decision."

Neal dismissed that notion, saying, "It is an old story that has never been acted upon and is a red herring."

During the 1990s there was a flurry of U.S. trademark registrations in Cuba. Among them: Playboy, Bud, Huggies, The Home Depot, Pizza Hut, Kmart, McDonald's, Tommy Hilfiger, Old Spice, Hawaiian Tropic, Starbucks Coffee, Healthy Choice, Radisson and Visa, according to the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council.

U.S. companies often sent their own representatives to register trademarks during the 1980s. But in recent years, they have hired Cuban law firms to go to the Oficina Cubana de la Propiedad Industrial in Havana to register and defend any misuse of corporate emblems.

Some now fear the decision could set a precedent that other countries can use to cancel trademarks or play politics with intellectual property law. Arab countries, for instance, could cancel trademarks for companies friendly to Israel or Pakistan could do the same with marks owned by companies working in India, said Reinsch.

"Basically, [the United States] let politics trump trademark policy," he said. "They took care of one company at the expense of a lot of others."

WHO OWNS HAVANA CLUB?

Although Bacardi, which has its U.S. headquarters in Miami, has claimed some victories in the fight over Havana Club, who actually owns the brand still hasn't been decided in a U.S. court.

In 1959, when Castro took power, Bacardi and Havana Club were both top rums in Cuba and both were nationalized. While Bacardi continued its business abroad, the owners of Havana Club, the Arechabala family, didn't restart their operations after going into exile in Spain.

"They had no financial means to do so because all of their assets and rum-making facilities were confiscated in Cuba," Bacardi's Neal said.

Meanwhile, the Cuban government started making Havana Club and selling it in communist Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

In 1973 the Arechabala family allowed the U.S. trademark for Havana Club to lapse. Three years later, the Cuban government jumped in and registered the U.S. trademark for the famous rum brand.

Then in 1993, the Cubaexport/Pernod Ricard joint venture started marketing the rum around the world, excluding the United States. The joint venture now distributes Havana Club in around 80 countries.

As the joint venture's sales grew steadily, Bacardi launched its campaign to claim the Havana Club brand in the United States. Throughout the trademark battle Bacardi has enlisted political heavyweights such as former U.S. Sen. Connie Mack and Florida Gov. Jeb Bush to press its case.

In 1997 Bacardi paid the Arechabalas for the right to Havana Club. "We purchased it from the rightful owners," Neal said.

After Bacardi U.S.A. launched Havana Club in the South Florida market some two weeks ago, Pernod Ricard and Cubaexport filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Delaware to keep Bacardi from selling the rum.

For the time being, there are two Havana Clubs -- one distilled in Puerto Rico by Bacardi and sold in the United States and another made in Cuba and distributed around the world.

Robert Orr, Pernod Ricard's U.S. spokesman, said the joint venture also intends to appeal the patent office decision, and he contends a trademark is not formally canceled until the appeals process runs its course.

Sanchelima, the Miami trademark lawyer, said he doesn't think any trademark retaliation on the part of Cuba is imminent.

But perhaps increasing the chances of such a move, say some lawyers, is the fact that Cuba lost another high-profile U.S. trademark case in February.

In that case Cubatabaco, a Cuban government-owned tobacco company, argued that even though it had not registered the trademark for Cohiba cigars in the United States, its name was sufficiently famous that New York-based General Cigar shouldn't be allowed to use it.

Yet the U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals rejected that argument, saying Cubatabaco couldn't acquire such publicity rights while the economic embargo was in effect.

Now there are two Cohiba cigars -- the version made in Cuba and another one rolled in the Dominican Republic and distributed by General Cigar.

The Cohiba and Havana Club decisions are "two big hits in rapid succession," said Miami attorney Jorge Espinosa. "Assuming [Cuba] refocuses from [Castro's] health issues, every one of these is something that adds possibility to retaliation."

---- Index References ----

Company: VICTORY; UNITED AIRLINES; STATE DEPARTMENT; HJ HEINZ CO; MCDONALDS CORP; US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE; BACARDI CORP; PERNOD RICARD ADR; UNITED AIR LINES INC; PERNOD RICARD

News Subject: (Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); World Trade (1WO85); Major Corporations (1MA93); Joint Ventures (1JO05); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Rum (1RU61); Agriculture, Food & Beverage Regulatory (1AG56); Spirits (1SP77); Transportation (1TR48); Beverages (1BE22); Food & Beverage Regulatory (1FO94); Airlines (1AI34); Alcoholic Beverages (1AL86); Food & Beverage Production (1FO79); Passenger Transportation (1PA35); Transportation Regulatory (1TR42); Air Transportation (1AI53); Agriculture, Food & Beverage (1AG53))

Region: (North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); Europe (1EU83); Eastern Europe (1EA48); Americas (1AM92); USA (1US73); Florida (1FL79); Caribbean (1CA06))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (BACARDI; BUD; CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; COFFEE; COHIBA; CONGRESS; CUBA; ECONOMIC COUNCIL; GOLDEN ARCHES; HAVANA CLUB; HAVANA CLUBS; HEINZ; HOME DEPOT PIZZA HUT; HUGGIES; K MART; MICROSOFT WAL MART CATERPILLAR; NATIONAL FOREIGN TRADE COUNCIL; NIKE; OFFICE OF FOREIGN; OFICINA CUBANA; PATENT OFFICE; PERNOD RICARD; PLAYBOY; STATE DEPARTMENT; US CUBA TRADE; US DISTRICT COURT; US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE; UNITED AIRLINES; VICTORY) (Arab; Arechabala; Assuming; Bacardi; Basically; Castro; Cigar; Connie Mack; Cubaexport; Cubatabaco; Fidel Castro; Hawaiian Tropic; Healthy Choice; J. Robert McBrien; Jeb Bush; Jesus Sanchelima; Jorge Espinosa; Levi; MATTHEW HAGGMAN; McDonald's, Tommy Hilfiger; Neal; Patricia Neal; Pepsi; Propiedad Industrial; Reinsch; Robert Orr; Sanchelima; Visa; William A. Reinsch) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (United States) (United States) (Washington) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Miami) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Havana) (Israel) (Pakistan) (India) (United States) (Miami) (Cuba) (Spain) (Cuba) (Eastern Europe) (Soviet Union) (United States) (United States) (South Florida) (Delaware) (Puerto Rico) (United States) (Cuba) (Miami) (Cuba) (Cuba) (United States) (New York) (Cuba) (Dominican Republic) (Miami) (Cuba) (us; usa; na; us.fl; us.fl.miami; cu; cub; do; dom; es; esp; il; in; ind; isr; pak; pk; pr; pri; as; asp; ca; cam; eu; eur; md; mde; nam; us.dc; us.de; us.ny; us.pr; cu..havana; us.dc.wshdc; us.ny.nyc)

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Ticker Symbol: Unknown:AHW; Unknown:BCD; Euronext:12069; NASDAQ-NMS:MSFT; NYSE:WMT; NYSE:GM; NYSE:HD; NYSE:MCD; NASDAQ-NMS:SBUX; Stockholm:SWMA

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Cubatabaco to challenge latest ruling on Cohiba.

Cuban cigar supplier Habanos' co-owner Cubatabaco has said it will continue to fight for recognition of its ownership of the Cohiba brand in the US following a decision by the supreme court to uphold General Cigar's claim to the brand in the US market.

The Cuban company, which has pursued its claim for several years, said it would now seek specific permission for protection from the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, which governs the US embargo on Cuba.

In 2004 a district court judge ruled that Cubatabaco was entitled to the trademark, but in February 2005 a court of appeal reversed the decision. The Cuban company--which owns Habanos in partnership with Franco-Spanish tobacco company Altadis--then appealed to the US supreme court to overturn the ruling (DFNI August 1 2005).

Cubatabaco's argument against General Cigar's ownership of the brand in the US is based on the Paris Convention, an international treaty signed by Cuba and the US that protects the trademarks of all companies and individuals in signatory nations.

---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Americas (1AM92); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (ALTADIS; COHIBA; PARIS CONVENTION; US TREASURY DEPARTMENT) (Cigar; Cubatabaco; Habanos)

Company Terms: HABANOS

Product: Tobacco products210000

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Section: A

U.S. SUPREME COURT: Cuba loses fight to competitor over its trademark cigar

BY FRANCES ROBLES, frobles@MiamiHerald.com

The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected the Cuban government's nine-year legal quest to snuff out that other Cohiba: the Dominican-made stogie sold by an American company.

The Supreme Court Monday let stand a New York appellate court ruling that the U.S. embargo prevents Cuba from obtaining a U.S. registry for its famous Cohiba trademark, cigars long favored by aficionados and even Fidel Castro until he stopped smoking years ago.

But the Cuban cigar company Cubatabaco says it's not giving up and will press the U.S. Department of Treasury for a license that would allow Cuba to register the trademark here. Since the embargo is the only legal obstacle for Cuba, the Treasury license would give Havana grounds to relaunch its court battle, Cubatabaco attorney David Goldstein said.

Although most people think of Cohiba as a Cuban cigar first made in 1966, a stogie by the same name has been manufactured in the Dominican Republic and sold in the United States dating back 25 years. It is the only Cohiba that's legal to buy in the United States.

General Cigar Co. first registered the Cohiba name in the United States in 1981. But cigar sales were lackluster back then, and the company did little with the famed name.

All that changed in 1992, when Cigar Aficionado magazine extolled the wonders of the Cuban Cohiba. General Cigar quickly filed to renew its trademark and in 1997 -- with the cigar business booming -- rolled out a new campaign plugging its own Cohibas made from Dominican leaves.

"We had that brand for more than 20 years, and Cuba didn't say a word," said General Cigar spokeswoman Victoria McKee. "They are two different cigars."

General Cigar uses a logo with a red dot in the O of Cohiba, an emblem different from the well-known yellow and black checker board used by the Cuban company.

But the Cuban cigar company cried foul, saying General Cigar was deliberately trying to trick consumers into thinking they were smoking the famous Cuban cigars.

'We acted in good faith at all times,' said General Cigar attorney Ignacio Sánchez.

Cubatabaco sued General Cigar Co. in 1997 in a New York federal court. The Cubans argued that Cohiba's famous name should trump General Cigar's trademark registration. A New York federal judge agreed in 2004 and ordered General Cigar to quit using the name. But General Cigar successfully appealed on the embargo argument.

"General Cigar intentionally exploited the Cohiba theme, and the trial judge agreed," Goldstein said. "We will continue to pursue our application for a license."

The Cubans say the United States has a broad obligation to protect "well-known" trademarks under the Paris Convention and other treaties.

The company added that hundreds of American companies have more than 5,000 trademarks registered in Cuba, in spite of the U.S. sanctions.

— Index References —

Company: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Legal (1LE33); Judicial (1JU36); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIGAR; COHIBA; CUBAN; CUBAN COHIBA; GENERAL CIGAR; GENERAL CIGAR CO; PARIS CONVENTION; SUPREME COURT MONDAY; TREASURY; US DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY; US SUPREME COURT) (Cubatabaco; David Goldstein; Fidel Castro; Goldstein; Ignacio Sánchez; Victoria McKee) (New York) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Cuba) (Havana) (Dominican Republic) (United States) (United States) (United States) (Cuba) (New York) (New York) (United States) (us; usa; na; us.fl; us.fl.miami; cu; cub; do; dom; ca; cam; nam; us.ny; cu..havana; us.ny.nyc)

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Section: BUSINESS

HIGH COURT REJECTS COHIBA CHALLENGE CUBA LOSES BID TO STOP U.S. FIRM FROM USING FAMOUS NAME ON ITS CIGARS.

Doreen Hemlock Business Writer

Staff Writer Ian Katz contributed to this report from Havana.

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday stubbed out a case over rights to the Cohiba brand name on cigars sold in the United States, upholding the rights of a New York company to use the name on products it makes outside Cuba.

Monday's decision not to hear a Cuban appeal basically allows recent rules on the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba to trump an older international treaty on trademarks, lawyers said. Washington has banned most U.S. trade with communist-led Cuba since the 1960s.

Bolstered by the decision, U.S. trademark holder General Cigar Co. said it will crack down in the United States "against manufacturers, distributors and retailers of counterfeit Cohiba cigars," including cigars made in Cuba and those with fake Cohiba labels. General Cigar makes its Cohibas in the Dominican Republic.

But Cuba's government-owned tobacco company, Cubatabaco, said it would keep up the fight and take its request to the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Controls, which oversees the U.S. trade embargo.

"Cubatabaco especially emphasizes that the United States is obligated by international treaties and the World Trade Organization agreement to protect well-known brands like Cohiba," the company said in a statement from Havana.

Cuba grants trademark protection to more than 5,000 U.S. brands, Cubatabaco added.

Some U.S. lawyers worried the Supreme Court decision could backfire, prompting Cuba to retaliate against U.S. trademarks registered on the island.

"My concern is whether they'll retroactively assail U.S. marks," said attorney Jorge Espinosa of Kluger Peretz Kaplan Berlin law firm in Miami, who has registered U.S. brands on the island.

At the heart of the case is the right to use a cigar name long associated with premium quality and Cuba's leader Fidel Castro himself.

General Cigar registered the Cohiba name in the United States in 1981 and updated its registration in 1995. It has been selling Dominican-made Cohibas for decades.

Cubatabaco sued in 1997, claiming rights to the name under U.S. law and international treaty. It argued the Cohiba name resonates with U.S. consumers -- as a premium Cuban cigar, even though the U.S. embargo bars Cuban products from entering the United States.

Cubatabaco has registered the Cohiba trade name in 115 other countries and sells the brand worldwide, except in the United States.

In 2004, a judge in New York barred General Cigar from using the Cohiba name, saying Cubatabaco gained rights during a five-year period when General Cigar dropped the brand. The judge cited stories about the Cuban-made cigars in U.S. magazines, saying the publicity helped make Cohiba a "famous" mark, owned by Cubatabaco.

But last year, the New York-based 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the ruling. The panel argued that under U.S. trademark law, Cubatabaco couldn't acquire rights through publicity while the U.S. trade embargo was in place.

Cubatabaco appealed to the Supreme Court -- to no avail. The Bush administration had recommended the Supreme Court not consider an appeal.

Cigar smokers can distinguish between the Dominican and Cuban versions of the brands, however.

General Cigar, owned since 2000 by Sweden's Swedish Match AB, markets a Dominican cigar whose label sports a red dot in the O. Cuba's Cohibas have a gold, black and white band.

Staff Writer Ian Katz contributed to this report from Havana.

Information from Bloomberg News was used in this report.

Doreen Hemlock can be reached at dhemlock@sun-sentinel.com or 305-810-5009.

--- Index References ---

Company: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; SWEDISH MATCH AB; SWEDISH MATCH AB (OLD); BLOOMBERG LP

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); World Trade Organization (1WO41); Intellectual Property (1IN75); World Organizations (1IN77); Judicial (1JU36); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (BLOOMBERG NEWS; BUSH; COHIBA; GENERAL CIGAR; GENERAL CIGAR CO; HIGH COURT; KLUGER PERETZ KAPLAN BERLIN; STAFF WRITER IAN KATZ; SUPREME COURT; SWEDISH

MATCH AB; US CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; US SUPREME COURT; US TREASURY DEPARTMENT)
(Cubatabaco; Doreen Hemlock; Fidel Castro; Information; Jorge Espinosa; Monday)

Keywords: RULING GENERAL CIGAR CO. U.S. CUBA TRADE

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Word Count: 699

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June 19, 2006

Cubatabaco Lawsuit 06 19

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TO BUSINESS, FOREIGN AND LEGAL AFFAIRS EDITORS:

Cuban Cigar Company Will Continue Fight for COHIBA Trademark in U.S.

HAVANA, June 19 /PRNewswire/ -- Despite a setback in the U.S. Supreme Court, CUBATABACO, the Cuban cigar company, announced today that it will continue to fight for the rights to the COHIBA trademark in the United States. COHIBA is Cuba's most renowned cigar brand, but cannot be sold in the U.S. because of the U.S. economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba. Cubatabaco made its announcement in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's June 19, 2006 order denying review of a lower court ruling that, in the absence of specific U.S. government permission, the U.S. blockade bars Cubatabaco from obtaining judicial protection of its COHIBA trademark in the United States. Cubatabaco will now pursue its pending application for U.S. government permission from the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, which administers the U.S. blockade.

In its amicus curiae brief filed in the Supreme Court, the United States specifically acknowledged that Cubatabaco could pursue this option. If granted, U.S. government permission would allow Cubatabaco to seek judicial protection for its COHIBA trademark despite the blockade.

Cubatabaco is attempting to stop General Cigar Co., Inc., a major U.S. cigar company, from using the COHIBA trademark for cigars in the U.S. In April 2004, Judge Robert W. Sweet, of the United States District Court in New York, issued a judgment in Cubatabaco's favor, after finding that that the Cuban COHIBA was "famous" among U.S. consumers before General Cigar began using the trademark. Without reaching the merits of Judge Sweet's ruling, the court of appeals in New York vacated the district court judgment on the ground that a U.S. government license was needed to grant relief to Cubatabaco.

In seeking U.S. government permission, Cubatabaco will emphasize the United States' international obligations to protect "well-known" trademarks, such as COHIBA, under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, a multilateral treaty, and TRIPs, a WTO agreement. Cubatabaco will also emphasize reciprocity: Cuba has permitted hundreds of U.S. companies to register and maintain over 5,000 trademarks in Cuba.

Cuba's world-famous COHIBA is generally considered Cuba's finest cigar, and is made entirely of Cuban-grown tobacco. The Cuban COHIBA consistently attains the highest ratings in U.S. cigar publications, ranking well ahead of General Cigar's Cohiba-labeled Dominican cigar.

The Cuban COHIBA always bears the famous Cuban COHIBA trade dress, which Cubatabaco indisputably owns in the United States. Cubatabaco will vigorously

defend against any infringement of its COHIBA trade dress. General Cigar has no right to use the Cuban COHIBA trade dress and has no access to genuine Cuban tobacco, which is responsible for the unparalleled quality of the authentic Cuban COHIBA.

For Further Information, contact:

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SOURCE Cubatabaco

-0- 06/19/2006

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Ext. 103, dgoldstein@rbskl.com, both of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky

& Lieberman, P.C.; Adargelio Garrido, Legal Advisor to Cubatabaco for

Intellectual Property, Havana, Cuba, +011-537-204-0528, agarrido@habanos.cu/

CO: Cubatabaco; General Cigar

ST: Cuba

IN: TOB

SU: LAW FOR PLW HSP

MJ

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---- Index References ----

Company: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Government Litigation (1GO18); World Trade Organization (1WO41); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Business Lawsuits & Settlements (1BU19); World Organizations (1IN77); Business Litigation (1BU04); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Judicial (1JU36); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (BOUDIN; COHIBA; CONTROL; CUBAN CIGAR CO; CUBAN COHIBA; GENERAL CIGAR; GENERAL CIGAR CO; MJ; RABINOWITZ; SUPREME COURT; TREASURY DEPARTMENT; US SUPREME COURT; WTO) (Adargelio Garrido; Advisor; CO; Cubatabaco; Cubatabaco Lawsuit; David Goldstein; Intellectual Property; Krinsky; Krinsky Lieberman; Legal; Legal Advisor; LEGAL AFFAIRS EDITORS; Lieberman; Michael Krinsky; P.C.; Adargelio Garrido; Property; Robert W. Sweet; Sweet; Telephone; TRIPs) (Cuba; CUB; LatinAmerica; United States; USA; NorthAmerica)

Keywords: (f); (Business); (Agriculture); (Tobacco)

Word Count: 796

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June 19, 2006

Supreme Court Confirms General Cigar's Ownership of COHIBA Trademark in the U.S.

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 19, 2006--General Cigar Co., Inc. announced today that the Supreme Court has denied Cubatabaco's petition for review in the dispute over ownership of the COHIBA(R) trademark in the United States.

As a result of the Supreme Court's ruling, the February 2005 decision of a United States Circuit Court of Appeals, which confirmed General Cigar's exclusive ownership of the COHIBA(R) mark in the United States, is final and is law of the case.

Gerry Roerty, vice president and general counsel of General Cigar, commented, "Today's ruling affirms what we have believed all along: That Cubatabaco had no standing to challenge General Cigar's ownership of the COHIBA(R) mark in the United States. Now that the Supreme Court has confirmed that General Cigar is the only legitimate owner of the Cohiba brand in the United States, we will enhance our ongoing nationwide initiatives against manufacturers, distributors and retailers of counterfeit COHIBA(R) cigars."

General Cigar received its first registration of the COHIBA(R) trademark in the United States in 1981, and obtained an updated registration in 1995. The company has been selling its Dominican COHIBA(R) cigar in the United States for more than two decades.

Cubatabaco filed the lawsuit in 1997 against General Cigar, claiming rights to the COHIBA(R) name in the United States under U.S. law and international treaties, although Cubatabaco had failed to take any legal action against General Cigar for nearly 20 years.

The COHIBA(R) line of premium cigars is handcrafted in the Dominican Republic and is a favorite among cigar connoisseurs. In addition to the COHIBA(R) hallmark line, General Cigar manufactures and markets COHIBA XV which was introduced in 2001.

About General Cigar

General Cigar Co., Inc., a subsidiary of Swedish Match, manufactures and markets handcrafted cigars for the premium market. Committed to delivering cigars of the finest quality, General Cigar produces Macanudo(R), Partagas(R), COHIBA(R), Punch(R), Excalibur(R), Hoyo de Monterrey(R), La Gloria Cubana(R) and several other leading premium brands. In addition, the company grows its own premium Connecticut Shade wrapper tobacco, as well as natural and candela wrapper in the Dominican Republic. General Cigar also operates Club Macanudo(R), a cigar bar in New York City. General Cigar sells through tobacconists nationwide. For more information, please visit www.cigarworld.com

(R)COHIBA, Macanudo, Partagas, Punch, Excalibur, Hoyo de Monterrey, La Gloria Cubana and Club Macanudo are registered trademarks of General Cigar Co., Inc.

CONTACT: General Cigar Co., Inc. Victoria McKee, 201-216-9256 or 732-580-5215 vmckee@gcigar.com

KEYWORD: NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL LATIN AMERICA

INDUSTRY KEYWORD: LEGAL/LAW ENVIRONMENT RETAIL

SOURCE: General Cigar Co., Inc.

--- Index References ---

Company: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Judicial (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Dominican Republic (1DO49); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); New York (1NE72); North America (1NO39); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIGAR CO INC; CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; CLUB MACANUDO; COHIBA; CUBATABACO; DOMINICAN COHIBA; GENERAL; GENERAL CIGAR CO; GENERAL CIGAR CO INC; MACANUDO; SUPREME COURT; UNITED STATES) (Cigar; Committed; Connecticut Shade; Cubana; Excalibur; Gerry Roerty; Gloria Cubana; La Gloria; Partagas; Punch; Punch(R), Excalibur; R), Partagas; Victoria McKee)

Keywords: NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL LATIN AMERICA (f); (LEGAL/LAW ENVIRONMENT RETAIL)

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June 19, 2006

Cuban Cigar Company Will Continue Fight for COHIBA Trademark in U.S.

HAVANA, June 19

HAVANA, June 19 /PRNewswire/ -- Despite a setback in the U.S. Supreme Court, CUBATABACO, the Cuban cigar company, announced today that it will continue to fight for the rights to the COHIBA trademark in the United States. COHIBA is Cuba's most renowned cigar brand, but cannot be sold in the U.S. because of the U.S. economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

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In its amicus curiae brief filed in the Supreme Court, the United States specifically acknowledged that Cubatabaco could pursue this option. If granted, U.S. government permission would allow Cubatabaco to seek judicial protection for its COHIBA trademark despite the blockade.

Cubatabaco is attempting to stop General Cigar Co., Inc., a major U.S. cigar company, from using the COHIBA trademark for cigars in the U.S. In April 2004, Judge Robert W. Sweet, of the United States District Court in New York, issued a judgment in Cubatabaco's favor, after finding that the Cuban COHIBA was "famous" among U.S. consumers before General Cigar began using the trademark. Without reaching the merits of Judge Sweet's ruling, the court of appeals in New York vacated the district court judgment on the ground that a U.S. government license was needed to grant relief to Cubatabaco.

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The Cuban COHIBA always bears the famous Cuban COHIBA trade dress, which Cubatabaco indisputably owns in the United States. Cubatabaco will vigorously defend against any infringement of its COHIBA trade dress. General Cigar

has no right to use the Cuban COHIBA trade dress and has no access to genuine Cuban tobacco, which is responsible for the unparalleled quality of the authentic Cuban COHIBA.

For Further Information, contact: Michael Krinsky, Esq. or David Goldstein, Esq. Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman, P.C. New York, New York 10006-1901 Telephone: 917 929 6051 or 212 254 1111 Ext. 103 Email: mkrinsky@rbskl.com, or dgoldstein@rbskl.com U.S. attorneys for Cubatabaco Adargelio Garrido Legal Advisor to Cubatabaco for Intellectual Property Havana, Cuba Telephone: 011 537 204 0528 E-mail: agarrido@habanos.cu

SOURCE Cubatabaco

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--- Index References ---

Company: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); World Trade Organization (1WO41); Intellectual Property (1IN75); World Organizations (1IN77); Judicial (1JU36); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (ADARGELIO GARRIDO; CIGAR; COHIBA; CUBAN; CUBAN CIGAR CO; CUBAN COHIBA; CUBATABACO; CUBATABACO ADARGELIO GARRIDO LEGAL ADVISOR; GENERAL CIGAR; GENERAL CIGAR CO; LEGAL ADVISOR; SUPREME COURT; TREASURY DEPARTMENT; US SUPREME COURT; WTO) (Cubatabaco; David Goldstein; David Goldstein, Esq.; Esq.; Krinsky Lieberman; Michael Krinsky; Robert W. Sweet; Sweet; TRIPs) (HAVANA) (United States) (Cuba) (United States) (United States) (United States) (United States) (Paris) (Cuba) (Cuba) (United States) (Cuba)

Keywords: (TOB); (LAW); (FOR); (PLW); (HSP)

Company Terms: CUBATABACO; GENERAL CIGAR

Word Count: 735

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2006 WLNR 1503146

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January 27, 2006

Section: 4

SUPREME COURT ASKS FOR GOVERNMENT POSITION IN CUBA TRADEMARK CASE

The Supreme Court asked the U.S. government in early January to offer its opinion in a case it is considering taking involving the question of whether the U.S. embargo against Cuba prevents Cuban companies from defending their trademarks in the United States. According to industry sources, many U.S. companies want the Supreme Court to decide that Cuba can defend its intellectual property rights in the U.S., as a decision to the contrary could open up U.S. companies to thousands of trademark violations in Cuba.

At issue is the Supreme Court's possible consideration of an appeal from a Cuban cigar manufacturer, Empresas Cubana del Tabaco (Cubatabaco). That company is arguing that General Cigar Co., Inc. (GCC) should not be permitted to use the brand name "Cohiba" to market cigars in the United States.

Cubatabaco sued GCC to prevent it from selling cigars under the Cohiba name. The district court found in its favor and ordered the cancellation of GCC's U.S. trademark registration for Cohiba cigars and permanently enjoined GCC from further use of the Cohiba mark. But, GCC had successfully appealed that decision in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in New York, which found that the U.S. embargo on Cuba barred any judicial relief in the case. Cubatabaco then petitioned the Supreme Court to take the case last September.

Robert Muse, an attorney with expertise on the embargo against Cuba, argued in an amicus brief in the case that the appeals court inappropriately disregarded submissions from the Bush Administration that said regulations governing the embargo would allow the court to strip GCC of its rights to use the Cohiba trademark. Muse, who filed his brief on behalf of the National Foreign Trade Council, said the failure of the appeals court to defer to the administration's position could be a factor that allows the Supreme Court to overturn that decision.

In its November 2004 submission to the appeals court, the Bush Administration argued that Cubatabaco has not acquired the rights to the Cohiba mark in the U.S. by way of Cohiba being a so-called "famous mark," and could only gain these rights by obtaining a license, which it has not done. However, the government also argued that U.S. regulations governing the embargo did not preclude the district court from ordering the cancellation of GCC's registration for the Cohiba mark or enjoining GCC from using that mark because "those orders do not depend on the finding regarding the acquisition of the mark" by Cubatabaco.

The government based this argument on the fact that U.S. law and treaty obligations give Cubatabaco the right to prevent the use of its trademark in the U.S., even if Cubatabaco does not have explicit rights to that mark in the United States. According to Supreme Court cases, trademark law goes beyond the protection of trademark holders and prohibits

actions that "deceive consumers and impair a producer's goodwill through the deceptive and misleading use of marks," the government noted in its brief.

In his amicus brief, Muse highlighted this interpretation and argued that the appeals court did not follow Supreme Court precedents requiring courts to defer to the Executive Branch's interpretations of its own regulations in recognition of the separation of powers mandated by the Constitution. It also emphasized that the courts have particularly recognized the need for this deference in matters relating to foreign policy or national security.

In addition, the U.S. government's brief before the appeals court argued that the district court's orders did not comprise any transfer of property prohibited by the regulations and thus were not inconsistent with them. But in its February 2005 decision, the appeals court ignored these government comments, and instead found that Cubatabaco had no property rights in the U.S., and that barring GCC from using the trademark would entail a transfer of property rights in the Cohiba mark in violation of the embargo.

In response to Cubatabaco's appeal, the Supreme Court on January 9 asked the U.S. Solicitor General to file a statement of the government's position in the case. The Office of the Solicitor General is expected to submit its comments by March 9, and the Supreme Court is expected to decide whether it will take the case by the end of its term in June.

According to Muse, the U.S. business community fears that if the Supreme Court agrees with the appeals court and rules that the embargo prevents the U.S. from preventing the use of Cuban trademarks in the U.S., Cuba could be relieved of its reciprocal obligations to protect U.S. trademarks in Cuba.

Muse explained that the failure of the U.S. to protect Cuban trademarks could be construed as a violation of the trademark protection provisions under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and other intellectual property treaties. Under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, this breach would give Cuba reciprocal rights to suspend its commitments to the U.S., he said.

As a result of the appeals court decision, the government of Cuba has already threatened to withdraw the protections it affords U.S. trademarks under the Paris Convention, Muse said.

Muse added that in a trademark war between the two countries, the U.S. has a lot more to lose than Cuba does. While Cuba has three or four trademarks registered in the U.S., U.S. companies have approximately 5,000 trademarks registered in Cuba. He also noted that passage of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act (TSRA) in 2000, which allowed limited sales of food and agriculture products to Cuba, led to a large increase of trademarks registered in Cuba.

Even though U.S. companies' sales under TSRA have been slow-going, the protection of these companies' trademarks is nonetheless critical as they try to establish their brands in anticipation of when the embargo with Cuba is lifted, Muse said. The resumption of trade with a previously sanctioned country depends on preserving treaties that govern and facilitate trade during the life of the embargo.

"It is therefore of enormous importance that U.S. sanctions programs that, by their very nature are temporary, are not applied by the courts in ways that breach and therefore terminate this country's reciprocal treaty obligations with countries upon which those sanctions have only been temporarily imposed," Muse wrote in his brief.

He also pointed to the experience U.S. companies had in South Africa to highlight the difficulty of recuperating trademarks once they have been infringed upon. U.S. companies were prohibited from paying the fees necessary to file trademark applications or to maintain existing trademark registrations in South Africa pursuant to the U.S. trade embargo of that country and recovering the rights to these trademarks required lengthy and expensive litigation.

---- Index References ----

Company: GCC

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Technology Law (1TE30); Information Technology Crime (1IN42); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Judicial (1JU36); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Smoking (1SM71); World Trade (1WO85); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Security (1SE29); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); Europe (1EU83); USA (1US73); Caribbean (1CA06); France (1FR23))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (BUSH ADMINISTRATION; CIGAR CO; CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; COHIBA; EXECUTIVE BRANCH; EXPORT ENHANCEMENT ACT; GCC; NATIONAL FOREIGN TRADE COUNCIL; SOLICITOR GENERAL IS; SUPREME COURT; TRADE SANCTIONS REFORM; TSRA; US SOLICITOR) (Cubatabaco; Empresas Cubana; Muse; Robert Muse)

Word Count: 1373

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June 6, 2005

Cubatabaco Denied Motion for Rehearing in Cohiba Trademark Dispute with General Cigar

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 6, 2005--The Second Circuit Court of Appeals has issued an order denying Cubatabaco's motion for a rehearing of its February 2005 ruling in favor of General Cigar over the ownership of the Cohiba(R) brand in the United States.

Based on the order date of June 1, Cubatabaco would have until August 30, 2005 to file a further appeal with the Supreme Court of the United States.

Nick Simeonidis, senior vice president and general counsel of General Cigar Co., Inc. commented, "I am gratified, but not surprised, that none of the Second Circuit judges voted to grant a rehearing. The court's unanimous opinion in General Cigar's favor was thorough, well-reasoned and conclusive. We feel confident that the Supreme Court will agree."

In February 2005, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in New York ruled unanimously in favor of General Cigar Co., Inc. in the lawsuit filed by Cubatabaco in 1997 over trademark ownership of the Cohiba brand in the United States.

In the ruling, the Second Circuit held that "General Cigar's legal right to the Cohiba mark has been established as against Cubatabaco. General Cigar has a right to use the mark in the United States because it owns the mark in the United States."

The Cohiba line of premium cigars is handcrafted in the Dominican Republic and is a favorite among cigar connoisseurs. In addition to the Cohiba hallmark line, General Cigar manufactures and markets Cohiba XV which was introduced in 2001.

About General Cigar

The maker of Macanudo(R), America's best selling premium cigar, as well as a number of other top-selling brands, General Cigar Co., Inc. manufactures and markets handcrafted cigars for the premium market. The company also grows its own Connecticut Shade wrapper tobacco and operates Club Macanudo(R), a cigar bar in New York City. General Cigar is based in New York City and sells through tobacconists nationwide. For more information, please visit www.cigarworld.com.

(R) Cohiba, Macanudo and Club Macanudo are registered trademarks of General Cigar Co., Inc.

CONTACT: General Cigar Co., Inc. Victoria McKee, 212-448-3824 vmckee@gcigar.com

KEYWORD: NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL LATIN AMERICA

INDUSTRY KEYWORD: LEGAL/LAW FOODS/BEVERAGES RETAIL MANUFACTURINGPRODUCT

SOURCE: General Cigar Co., Inc.

---- Index References ----

Company: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

News Subject: (Judicial (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Cigars (1CI03))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); New York (1NE72); North America (1NO39))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIGAR CO; CIGAR CO INC; CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; CLUB MACANUDO; COHIBA; CUBATABACO; CUBATABACO DENIED MOTION; GENERAL CIGAR CO INC; MACANUDO; SUPREME COURT) (Cigar; Nick Simeonidis; Victoria McKee)

Keywords: NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL LATIN AMERICA (f); (LEGAL/LAW FOODS/BEVERAGES RETAIL MANUFACTURINGPRODUCT)

Word Count: 460

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4/1/05 Cuba News 12
2005 WLNR 25829733

Cuba News
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April 1, 2005

Volume 13; Issue 4

Cuba loses U.S. right to Cohiba trademark.

Cuba's cigar industry was dealt some bad news on Feb. 24, when after nine years of litigation, a New York federal judge ruled that Cubatabaco had no legal right to its Cohiba trademark in the United States because of the U.S. trade embargo.

The ruling by the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals reverses a lower court's opinion and lets New York-based General Cigar Holdings keep selling cigars with the Cohiba name.

"We always believed we owned the U.S. rights to the brand and are pleased that the appeals court ruled in our favor," said Edgar Cullman Jr., president and CEO of General Cigar, a subsidiary of Swedish Match.

Havana-based Cubatabaco exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide except to the United States. In 1981, General Cigar registered the Cohiba trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and has been making cigars with that label at a factory in the Dominican Republic ever since.

Workers there produce the best-selling premium cigar in the U.S., Macanudo, and several other leading premium brands including Partagas, Punch and Hoyo de Monterrey.

Lawyers for Cubatabaco said they'll appeal the ruling and if necessary will take the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

---- Index References ----

Company: GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

Language: ES

Other Indexing: (United States; Cuba)

Keywords: (General interest); (News, opinion and commentary); (Trademark Owners & Lessors); (Legal issues & crime); (Legal/Government Regulation); (Cases); (Tobacco industry); (Tobacco industry - Cases); (Trademark licensing); (Trademark licensing - Cases); (Trademark licenses); (Trademark licenses - Cases)

Company Terms: CUBATABACO; GENERAL CIGAR CO

Product: Patent Owners & Lessors; Tobacco; TOBACCO MANUFACTURERS; Owners and Lessors of Other Non-Financial Assets

Sic: 6794; 0132; 2100

Naics Code: 53311

Word Count: 239

End of Document

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2/25/05 Daily News (Los Angeles, CA) (Pg. Unavail. Online)
2005 WLNR 28768108

Daily News (Los Angeles, CA)
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February 25, 2005

Cohiba cigar suit snuffed out function

By Robert Gearty

Feb. 25--Makers of the cigar Fidel Castro made famous were fuming yesterday after an appeals court sent its trademark infringement lawsuit against a New York company up in smoke.

The 2nd Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that the Cuban company Cubatabaco does not have the exclusive naming rights to Cohiba in the United States. The three-judge panel cited the 42-year-old Cuban embargo as reason for stubbing out Cubatabaco's stogie battle against New York-based General Cigar.

"It's been a long, expensive battle to beat them," said General Cigar lawyer John Kirby after the court declared the company owner of the Cohiba mark in the U.S.

Cubatabaco sued in 1997 when General Cigar came out with its own \$20 Cohiba, hand-rolled with tobacco from the Dominican Republic and the Cameroons. Officials from Cubatabaco, which is owned by the Cuban government, declined to comment on the legal setback.

But if it's any consolation, Cubatabaco's Cohiba -- made especially for Castro after the Cuban revolution -- is still considered the Cadillac of cigars for lovers of lighting up.

Cigar Aficionado magazine once compared the Cuban Cohiba to a "superb main course at a Michelin three-star restaurant."

To see more of the Daily News, or to subscribe to the newspaper, go to <http://www.NYDailyNews.com>.

---- Index References ----

Company: CUBATABACO; CULBRO CORP

News Subject: (Drug Addiction (1DR84); Health & Family (1HE30); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Judicial Cases & Rulings (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Smoking (1SM71); Trademarks (1TR15))

Industry: (Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); Caribbean (1CA06); Cuba (1CU43); Latin America (1LA15); New York (1NE72); North America (1NO39); U.S. Mid-Atlantic Region (1MI18); USA (1US73))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (John Kirby; Fidel Castro)

Word Count: 217

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2/25/05 Reuters News 16:54:27

Reuters

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February 25, 2005

Cubatabaco to appeal U.S. trademark ruling.

NEW YORK, Feb 25 (Reuters) - Cuban government tobacco company Cubatabaco said on Friday it would appeal a federal court ruling that took away its right to the Cohiba cigar trademark in the United States.

On Thursday, the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Cubatabaco could not hold the trademark because of the U.S. embargo against Cuba. The ruling by the three-member panel reversed a trial judge's decision in favor of Cubatabaco.

Thursday's court ruling allows New York-based General Cigar Holdings to market cigars under the Cohiba name in the United States. Earlier this week, tobacco products maker Swedish Match said it agreed to buy the remaining 36 percent of U.S. General Cigar that it did not already own.

General Cigar registered the Cohiba trademark in the United States in 1981 and makes its Cohiba cigars in the Dominican Republic.

Cubatabaco, based in Havana, exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide except to the United States, where the embargo blocks the imports.

The Cuban company said in a statement that it would appeal the decision to the entire Court of Appeals, and, if necessary, to the U.S. Supreme Court. It said it will seek vindication of its rights under the Paris Convention, an international trademark treaty to which the United States and Cuba are parties.

The complex U.S. trademark litigation began in 1997 when the Cuban company first filed suit in federal court to stop General Cigar from using the Cohiba name in the United States.

---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Legal (1LE33); Legislation (1LE97); Judicial (1JU36); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Emerging Market Countries (1EM65); Government (1GO80); Global Econopolitics (1GL97); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26); World Trade (1WO85); Market Financials (1FI61); Global Politics (1GL73))

Industry: (Food & Beverage Production (1FO79); Tobacco (1TO65); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Agriculture, Food & Beverage (1AG53); Beverages (1BE22); Cigars (1CI03))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Northern Europe (1NO01); Caribbean (1CA06); New York (1NE72); Americas (1AM92); USA (1US73); Europe (1EU83); Scandinavia (1SC27); U.S. Mid-Atlantic Region (1MI18); North America (1NO39); Sweden (1SW65); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; COHIBA; COURT OF APPEALS; US SUPREME COURT)
(Cigar; Cigar Holdings; Cubatabaco)

Word Count: 249

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2/25/05 Seattle Times A2
2005 WLNR 2945460

Seattle Times (WA)
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February 25, 2005

Section: ROP News

Cuba loses the U.S. rights to famed brand of cigar

Gail Appleson; Reuters

NEW YORK — A federal court took the U.S. rights to the famed Cohiba cigar name away from a Cuban government tobacco company yesterday, granting U.S. marketing rights to the trademark to New York-based General Cigar Holdings.

The U.S. 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Cubatabaco could not hold the trademark in the United States because of the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. In its ruling, the appeals panel reversed a lower court's opinion that had stopped General Cigar from selling products under the Cohiba name in the United States.

"We hold that the Embargo Regulations bar Cubatabaco's acquisition of property rights in the U.S.," the appeals court said.

Nick Simeonidis, senior vice president and general counsel of General Cigar, said the ruling was a landmark decision in the areas of trademark law and law governing the Cuban embargo.

Cubatabaco, based in Havana, exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide, except to the United States, where the embargo blocks the imports.

General Cigar registered the Cohiba trademark in the United States in 1981 and makes cigars with that label in the Dominican Republic.

General Cigar produces the top-selling premium cigar in the United States, Macanudo, and several other leading premium brands in the United States, including Partagas, Punch and Hoyo de Monterrey.

Wally Mcnamee / CORBIS : Cuban dictator Fidel Castro exhales after a puff on a Cohiba brand cigar in 1977. Cubatabaco, owned by the Cuban government, exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide. (0395420459)

---- Index References ----

Company: PUNCH ASSOCIATES INVESTMENT MGMT INC

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Smoking (1SM71))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; COHIBA; CUBATABACO; PARTAGAS; PUNCH) (Cigar; Cigar Holdings; Fidel Castro; Hoyo; Macanudo; Nick Simeonidis; Wally Mcnamee)

Edition: Fourth

Word Count: 305

End of Document

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12/17/04 Inside US Trade (Pg. Unavail. Online)
2004 WLNR 14261111

Inside US Trade
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December 17, 2004

Section: 51

BUSH ADMINISTRATION DEFENDS CUBA IN CIGAR TRADEMARK DISPUTE

The Bush Administration last month offered a legal defense to Cuba in a fight over the U.S. rights to a cigar trademark that Cuba is trying to secure, to the detriment of a U.S. company. In a Nov. 12 submission to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York, the U.S. Justice Department pointed out that nothing in U.S. law or regulations prevents the court from stripping the Cohiba trademark from the U.S. company General Cigar in light of U.S. commitments under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

While the administration stopped short of advising that Cuba should be given trademark, taking the mark away from General Cigar would make it relatively easy for Cuba to apply for a license giving them the trademark, sources said.

As a result of the Justice Dept. submission, the Cuban company claiming rights to the Cohiba trademark, Cubatabaco, renewed its push to seek a license allowing it to formally own the U.S. rights to the trademark by pressing for a license with the Treasury Department and a registration of the mark at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

The U.S. government submission will likely be seen as controversial by some, as the administration made the submission after the court asked for an official government position on whether the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba prevents Cuban entities from gaining U.S. trademark rights even if they have rights to a famous mark in other countries. The U.S. government agreed with General Cigar's claims that the embargo prevents the U.S. from recognizing rights under this so-called famous marks doctrine, and said the embargo means Cuban entities can only gain trademark rights in the U.S. through a license issued by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control.

However, the U.S. then proceeded to argue that the court would be within its rights to strip General Cigar of its rights to the mark. Informed sources said this week that if the court rules along these lines, it would essentially prevent any U.S. company from owning the U.S. rights to the Cohiba mark, and would allow Cubatabaco to take possession through a formal license application.

At press time, both sides of the dispute were awaiting a decision from the court.

The fight over the mark began when Cubatabaco, which argued that General Cigar was using the Cohiba brand even though Cubatabaco had made the brand famous throughout the world, sued General Cigar in the New York District Court. That court decided last March that Cubatabaco had a protectable mark in the U.S. based on a finding that well-known marks deserve protection even when they were not properly registered.

General Cigar appealed that decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals, and argued that the U.S. embargo and the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) prevent Cubatabaco from acquiring trademarks rights in the United States. The court heard oral arguments on the appeal in late August.

Days later, the court asked the Bush Administration for an opinion on this topic by mid-October, a deadline that was later extended until after the U.S. presidential election. The Nov. 12 submission that resulted from inter-agency deliberations agreed that the embargo should prevent Cubatabaco from claiming its U.S. rights.

Specifically, the Justice Dept. submission said the CACR prohibits all transactions involving property in which Cuba or a Cuban national has an interest. It also noted that the term "property" is defined to include trademarks, and noted that the only exceptions to this rule are transactions licensed by the U.S. government.

The U.S. submission also argued that "a judicial order that actually transfers property or property interests is prohibited... as is the execution of any judgment when that execution transfers property."

Based on these findings, the U.S. said the lower court's finding could not stand. "[T]he district court's judgment regarding trademark infringement appears to rest on its holding that Cubatabaco acquired the United States trademark rights to the COHIBA mark through operation of the famous marks doctrine in 1992," the U.S. wrote. "And that holding, in turn, constitutes a transfer prohibited under the Regulations."

However, the U.S. then constructed an argument that would allow Cubatabaco to ultimately succeed in its effort to wrest the mark away from Cohiba. The U.S. said that because Cubatabaco registered Cohiba in other countries, and the mark was famous and had meaning in the U.S. before its use in the U.S. by General Cigar, the Paris Convention, to which both the U.S. and Cuba are signatories, could be used to help Cuba protect its rights.

That convention, which took effect in the U.S. through the Lanham Act, holds that, "The countries of the Union undertake... to refuse or to cancel the registration, and to prohibit the use, of a trademark which constitutes a reproduction, an imitation, or a translation, liable to create confusion, of a mark considered by the competent authority of the country of registration or use to be well known in that country as being already the mark of a person entitled to the benefits of this Convention and used for identical or similar goods."

The U.S. said this language could be used to argue that the U.S. should strip General Cigar of its U.S. rights to Cohiba.

"For the foregoing reasons, the Cuban Assets Control Regulations prohibit Cubatabaco from acquiring the rights to the COHIBA trademark in the United States in 1992 by operation of the famous marks doctrine," the U.S. wrote. "Nevertheless, the Regulations do not prohibit the cancellation of General Cigar's mark and the district court's order enjoining General Cigar from using the COHIBA mark."

In the wake of the U.S. submission, Cubatabaco indicated it agreed with the U.S. government. However, General Cigar argued in a Dec. 3 brief to the court that the U.S. argument should be ignored because it would effectively lead the court to decide the issue in a way that would result in giving Cubatabaco the mark, which the U.S. submission itself said would not be a proper decision.

General Cigar also argued that a court decision mirroring the U.S. brief would ignore U.S. statute that grants rights based on which entity filed for trademark protection first.

---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Information Technology Crime (1IN42); Judicial (1JU36); Cigars (1CI03))

Industry: (Tobacco (1TO65); Security (1SE29); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); Europe (1EU83); USA (1US73); New York (1NE72); France (1FR23); Caribbean (1CA06))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CACR; COHIBA; JUSTICE DEPT; TREASURY DEPARTMENT; US COURT OF APPEALS; US JUSTICE DEPARTMENT; US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE) (Bush; BUSH ADMINISTRATION DEFENDS CUBA; Cigar; Cuba; Cubatabaco; Days; Informed)

Word Count: 1255

End of Document

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6/23/04 Bus. Wire 22:20:00

Business Wire
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June 23, 2004

Court of Appeals Allows General Cigar to Continue Selling COHIBA While It Appeals Lower Court Ruling

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 23, 2004--General Cigar announced today that the Second Circuit Court of Appeals had granted its request for a stay pending appeal of a lower court's May 26th ruling against General Cigar in the COHIBA trademark dispute with Cubatabaco.

The stay means that General Cigar will be permitted to continue marketing and selling COHIBA cigars while the appeal is pending.

"We are obviously pleased with the Second Circuit's decision," said Edgar Cullman Jr., president and chief executive officer of General Cigar. He noted further, "Stays are not usual in trademark cases, so this does give us encouragement."

General Cigar received its first registration of the COHIBA trademark in the United States in 1981, and obtained an updated registration in 1995. The company has been selling its COHIBA cigar in the United States for over two decades. The COHIBA line of cigars is handcrafted in the Dominican Republic and is a favorite among cigar connoisseurs.

Cubatabaco filed its lawsuit against General Cigar in 1997, claiming rights to the COHIBA name in the United States under U.S. law and international treaties, although Cubatabaco had failed to take any legal action against General Cigar for nearly 20 years.

About General Cigar

The maker of Macanudo®, America's best selling premium cigar, as well as a number of other top-selling brands, General Cigar Co., Inc. manufactures and markets handcrafted cigars for the premium market. The company also grows its own Connecticut Shade wrapper tobacco and operates Club Macanudo®, a cigar bar in New York City. General Cigar is based in New York City and sells through tobacconists nationwide. For more information, please visit www.cigarworld.com.

® Macanudo and Club Macanudo are registered trademarks of General Cigar Co., Inc.

CONTACT: General Cigar Co., Inc. Victoria McKee, 212-448-3824 vmckee@gcigar.com

KEYWORD: NEW YORK

INDUSTRY KEYWORD: RETAIL FOODS/BEVERAGES CLASS ACTION LAWSUITS

SOURCE: General Cigar Co., Inc.

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---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Judicial (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Cigars (1CI03))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (APPEALS LOWER COURT; CIGAR CO; CIGAR CO INC; CIRCUIT; CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS; CLUB MACANUDO; COHIBA; COURT OF APPEALS; CUBATABACO; GENERAL CIGAR CO INC) (Cigar; Cubatabaco; Edgar Cullman Jr.; Logon; Victoria McKee; YORKINDUSTRY KEYWORD)

Keywords: NEW YORK (f); (RETAIL FOODS/BEVERAGES CLASS ACTION LAWSUITS)

Word Count: 433

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5/1/04 Caribbean Update (Pg. Unavail. Online)

2004 WLNR 22011733

Caribbean Update

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May 1, 2004

Volume 18; Issue 4

Cuba cigar brouhaha.

CUBA CIGAR BROUHAHA. U.S. District Judge Robert Sweet in Manhattan ruled that New York-based General Cigar, a unit of Swedish Match AB, didn't own the rights to the brand and violated the trademark, reports Bloomberg News (March 30, 2004):

Havana-based Cubatabaco owns the mark and exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide except to the U.S., where an embargo blocks the imports. General Cigar, 36% owned by the Cullman family, has been making Cohibas in the Dominican Republic for more than a decade and selling them in the U.S since 1992 for as much as US\$20 each, according to its Web site. "Obviously, the right to reclaim our mark is very important to us," said Kevin Walsh, the lawyer for Cubatabaco, which is also seeking undetermined damages from Swedish Match;

The ruling deals a blow to Swedish Match, which in February said fourth-quarter profit fell 13% as the dollar dropped against the krona, cutting into revenue from the U.S. Sweet said in a 137-page ruling that General Cigar re-introduced its own Cohiba cigar in 1992 to "capitalize on the success of the Cuban Cohiba brand." He also said he found "strong evidence of intentional copying" of the brand. General Cigar said it would appeal. "Based on our long-standing U.S. registration of the Cohiba brand and Cubatabaco's acquiescence for almost two decades, we marketed this brand with the confidence that we owned the mark," said General Cigar Chief Executive Edgar Cullman. Fidel Castro told Cigar Aficionado magazine in an interview that cigars have boosted the prestige of his country and are "one of the most important export items."

---- Index References ----

Company: SWEDISH MATCH AB ADR; SWEDISH MATCH CORP; GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; SWEDISH MATCH AB

News Subject: (Smoking (ISM71); Economics & Trade (IEC26))

Industry: (Tobacco (ITO65); Cigars (ICI03); Consumer Products & Services (ICO62))

Region: (Cuba (ICU43); Caribbean (ICA06); North America (INO39); New York (INE72); USA (IUS73); Americas (IAM92); Europe (IEU83); Latin America (ILA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (BLOOMBERG NEWS; COHIBA; CUBATABACO; SWEDISH MATCH) (Cigar; Cigar Aficionado; Cullman; Edgar Cullman; Executive; Fidel Castro; Kevin Walsh; Robert Sweet; Sweet) (Cuba; Sweden; United States)

Keywords: (Business); (Business, regional); (Economics); (Legal issues & crime); (Parent-to-subsidary activities); (Subsidiary-to-parent activities); (Subsidiaries, divisions and units); (Investigations); (Tobacco industry); (Tobacco industry - Investigations)

Company Terms: SWEDISH MATCH AB; GENERAL CIGAR CO

Word Count: 319

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4/7/04 Brand Republic 00:00:00

Brand Republic news wire
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April 7, 2004

Castro firm wins victory in US court in cigar brand battle

Joe Lepper, Brand Republic

07 April, 2004

LONDON - Cuban leader Fidel Castro has won a victory in the US courts blocking attempts by an American firm to exploit one of his favourite cigar brands, the Cohiba.

A US District Court has ruled against New York-based firm General Cigar, which produces its own version of the famous cigar enjoyed by the Cuban president and had laid claim to the trademark in the US.

However, Judge Roberts Sweet said that General Cigar's claim infringed on the "protectable mark" held by Cubatabaco, the Cuban firm that has produced the Cohiba for the last three decades in revolutionary Cuba.

A factor in the judge's decision was the way advertising for the US brand gave the impression of an association with Cuba and the Cuban version, despite being grown in the Dominican Republic. This was deemed to have created confusion among consumers.

General Cigar, which faces having to hand over any packaging that bears the infringing trademark, is expected to appeal against the ruling.

The Cohiba, which was developed in the late 1960s by Castro's personal cigar roller, is considered one of the best cigars in the world by experts.

Cigar Aficionado magazine in 1992 compared the brand to a glass of Chateau Lafite Rothschild and a Michelin three-star meal.

This legal decision follows other efforts by Western firms to exploit images associated with the Communist-led Caribbean island, which has been ruled by Castro since the revolution of 1959.

Just over three years ago Alberto Diaz Gutierrez, the photographer who took the iconic photograph of Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara, won an out-of-court settlement after the image was used in an advertisement for a Smirnoff brand. The photographer said that the advertising campaign trivialised the photo's historical significance.

If you have an opinion on this or any other issue raised on BrandRepublic, join the debate in the Forum here.

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---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Cigars (1CI03))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Americas (1AM92); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CHATEAU LAFITE ROTHSCHILD; COHIBA; SMIRNOFF) (Alberto Diaz Gutierrez; Castro; Che Guevara; Cigar; Fidel Castro; Roberts Sweet)

Word Count: 379

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4/5/04 Adver. Age; Midwest Region Ed. 4
2004 WLNR 25093184

Advertising Age; Midwest region edition
Crain Communications, Incorporated Apr 5, 2004

April 5, 2004

Volume 75; Issue 14

Castro's Cuban cigar brand prevails in trademark fight

Lisa Sanders

U.S. company ordered to halt sale of its own version of the Cohiba

SCORE ONE FOR Fidel Castro.

The Cuban dictator famed for his love of cigars is surely celebrating the U.S. District Court ruling in New York last week. A judge granted trademark protection to the famed Cohiba brand cigar that was made for him and is a high-status commercial icon of the island he rules.

In a March 29 opinion, Judge Robert Sweet Jr. stopped New York-based General Cigar from selling its own version of the Cohiba, which legend has it is rolled on the thighs of virgins. His decision cancelled that firm's trademark claim in the U.S. to the brand, which judge Sweet found infringed on the "protectable mark" held by Cuban cigar company Cubatabaco, which developed Cohibas in the late 1960s. General Cigar intends to appeal.

The judge's opinion, one attorney said, will likely soon become an order, at which point General Cigar must turn over to Cubatabaco merchandise, packaging and other materials "which bear the infringing trademark."

FROM CUBA: Cubatabaco's Cohiba

Advertising and marketing were not the primary factors determining Judge Sweet's ruling, but both clearly factored into his decision. "In 1997," he writes, "advertising for the General Cigar Cohiba attempted to create an association in the consumer's mind to Cuba and the Cuban Cohiba." Cubatabaco's attorneys at Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman, New York, argued that in its ads, created by New York agency McCaffery Ratner Gottlieb & Lane, General Cigar sought to foster confusion between the Cuban Cohibas, which are grown and rolled in Cuba, and General Cigar's Cohibas, which are made and grown from Cuban seeds in the Dominican Republic.

In his opinion, Judge Sweet wrote, "The advertising undertaken by others which misleadingly suggests an affiliation only adds to the possibility of confusion at the initial stage, even if the consumer later learns there is no affiliation between the two brands." Calls to the agency, to General Cigar's attorneys and to the company were not returned at press time.

Although the issue of the brand's health is not mentioned in the 137-page opinion, Judge Sweet's ruling "is the right thing," said Allen Adamson, managing director, Landor Group, a branding consultancy owned by WPP Group. "From

a pure brand-theory point of view, no matter where you find a brand distributed, it should have the same qualities, heritage and experience. The promise should be consistent around the world."

--- Index References ---

Company: MCCAFFERY RATNER GOTTLIEB; WPP PLC

News Subject: (Drug Addiction (1DR84); Health & Family (1HE30); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Judicial Cases & Rulings (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Smoking (1SM71); Trademarks (1TR15))

Industry: (Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); Caribbean (1CA06); Cuba (1CU43); Latin America (1LA15); New York (1NE72); North America (1NO39); U.S. Mid-Atlantic Region (1MI18); USA (1US73))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (Robert Sweet Jr.; Fidel Castro; Cigar Cohiba; Allen Adamson) (United States; US; Cuba)

Keywords: Cigars; Federal court decisions; Trademarks; Brands; Dictators

Word Count: 409

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3/31/04 Miami Herald 3C
2004 WLNR 19445667

Miami Herald (FL)
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March 31, 2004

Section: Business

GENERAL CIGAR LOSES COVETED COHIBA NAME

EFE

NEW YORK

General Cigar lost its Cohiba trademark in a court ruling because it has the same name as the highly coveted cigars from Havana marketed abroad by Cuban tobacco company Cubatabaco.

U.S. Federal District Judge Robert Sweet issued the ruling in response to a suit filed by Cubatabaco.

According to the decision, New York-based General Cigar, which manufactured and marketed products from the Dominican Republic under the Cohiba trademark, can no longer use that name.

General Cigar executives said they would appeal the decision immediately, noting that the company had registered the Cohiba trademark in 1981 and obtained updated registration in 1995.

They also insisted that General Cigar had been selling cigars under the Cohiba trademark with Cubatabaco's consent for more than 20 years.

"We intend to appeal this decision and feel confident that it will be overturned," General Cigar CEO Edgar Cullman Jr. said in a statement.

Litigation began in 1997 when Cubatabaco filed suit in a federal court in New York.

---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Smoking (1SM71))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIGAR; COHIBA; CUBATABACO; GENERAL CIGAR; US FEDERAL DISTRICT) (CIGAR LOSES COVETED COHIBA; Edgar Cullman Jr.; Litigation; Robert Sweet)

Edition: Final

Word Count: 204

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3/30/04 Charlotte Observer (N.C.) 3D
2004 WLNR 3298750

Charlotte Observer (NC)
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March 30, 2004

Section: BUSINESS

BUSINESS DIGEST

ASSOCIATED PRESS, BLOOMBERG NEWS

Union workers at bankrupt firm OK labor contract

STEEL With few alternatives for keeping their company alive, union workers at bankrupt Weirton Steel Corp. voted overwhelmingly Monday to accept a labor contract offered by the mill's prospective new owner, International Steel Group Inc.

The five-year pact between ISG and the 3,000-member Independent Steelworkers Union is modeled after contracts the Ohio steelmaker has struck with the United Steelworkers of America at its other mills.

The contract vote was one of the union's most important decisions since 1983, when employees decided to buy the mill from its previous owner, now-defunct National Steel Corp.

ISG is headed by New York investor Wilbur Ross, who has bought two of North Carolina's largest textile makers - Greensboro-based Cone Mills and Burlington - out of bankruptcy to form International Textile Group.

Judge sends case against ex-Qwest execs to jury

SCANDAL A federal judge refused Monday to acquit four former Qwest executives accused of artificially boosting company revenue by \$34 million, saying there was enough evidence to let a jury decide the defendants' fate.

Thomas Hall, Grant Graham, John Walker and Bryan Treadway are accused of conspiring to help the telecommunications company improperly book the money in June 2001 to meet financial targets, perhaps hoping to boost their own bonuses.

All have pleaded not guilty to conspiracy and fraud charges stemming from a \$100 million deal to connect Arizona schools to the Internet. Prosecutors say the defendants adjusted terms of the deal to allow revenue to be booked right away, instead of over the life of the contract, and then lied to cover their actions.

Biotech giant widens ability to develop drugs

ACQUISITION Amgen Inc., the world's largest biotechnology company, has agreed to acquire the remaining shares of Tularik Inc. it doesn't already own for \$1.3 billion in stock, broadening its ability to develop new drugs.

Amgen sells drugs that fight anemia, infection and arthritis. The Thousand Oaks, Calif.-based company said Monday that the acquisition will give it five clinical programs and about 300 research scientists.

Tularik, which is based in South San Francisco, is working on treatments for cancer, inflammatory diseases, type 2 diabetes and obesity.

The acquisition gives Amgen a strong research presence in the biotechnology hotbed of San Francisco, where other biotech giants like Genentech Inc. and Chiron Corp. have their main facilities.

General Cigar ordered to stop selling Cuban brand

TOBACCO Cuba's state-run tobacco company won a U.S. court order blocking General Cigar Holdings Inc. from selling cigars in the United States under the Cohiba brand favored by Fidel Castro. U.S. District Judge Robert Sweet in Manhattan ruled that New York-based General Cigar, a unit of Swedish Match AB, didn't own the rights to the brand and had violated the trademark.

Havana-based Cubatabaco owns the trademark and exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide, except to the U.S., where an embargo blocks the imports.

General Cigar, 36 percent owned by the Cullman family, has been making Cohibas in the Dominican Republic for more than a decade and selling them in the United States since 1992 for as much as \$20 each, according to its Web site.

"Obviously, the right to reclaim our mark is very important to us," said Kevin Walsh, the lawyer for Cubatabaco, which is also seeking undetermined damages from Swedish Match.

The ruling deals a blow to Swedish Match, which last month said fourth-quarter profit fell 13 percent as the dollar dropped against the krona, cutting into revenue from the United States. On March 19, the company dismissed CEO Lennart Sunden, who focused on selling snuff and cigars. Sunden said he left in a dispute over his pension.

PHOTO

1. AP FILE PHOTO. HOLLYWOOD ACCEPTS BUYOUT. Reanna Smithey and her mother, Sara Smithey, pick out digital video discs at the Hollywood Video in Tigard, Ore. Hollywood Entertainment Corp. announced Monday it has agreed to a buyout offer from a group led by a Los Angeles-based investment firm.

COLUMN: Business Digest * News From Around the Nation and World\ TYPE: BRIEF

— Index References —

Company: NOVARTIS AG*; NATIONAL STEEL CORP; TULARIK INC; UNITED STEELWORKERS; HOLLYWOOD MANAGEMENT CO; INTERNATIONAL STEEL GROUP INC; INDEPENDENT STEELWORKERS UNION; GRANITE CITY STEEL CO; ISG; QWEST CORP; WEIRTON STEEL CORP; HOLLYWOOD ENTERTAINMENT CORP; AMGEN INC; SWEDISH MATCH CORP; MITTAL STEEL COMPANY NV; GENENTECH INC; ARCELORMITTAL ADR; SWEDISH MATCH AB; NOVARTIS

VACCINES AND DIAGNOSTICS INC; GLOBAL STEELWORKS PHILIPPINES INC; ARCELORMITTAL USA INC

News Subject: (Labor Unions (1LA31); Smoking (1SM71); Major Corporations (1MA93); Corporate Groups & Ownership (1XO09); Bankruptcies (1BA08); HR & Labor Management (1HR87); Business Management (1BU42))

Industry: (Metals & Mining (1ME07); Tobacco (1TO65); Pharmaceuticals & Biotechnology (1PH13); Steel & Iron (1ST73); Biopharmaceuticals (1BI13); Natural Resources (1NA60); Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Caribbean (1CA06); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); California (1CA98); North Carolina (1NO26); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (ACQUISITION AMGEN INC; AMGEN; CHIRON CORP; CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; CUBATABACO; GENENTECH INC; HOLLYWOOD; HOLLYWOOD ENTERTAINMENT CORP; HOLLYWOOD VIDEO; INDEPENDENT STEELWORKERS UNION; INTERNATIONAL STEEL GROUP INC; ISG; NATIONAL STEEL CORP; OHIO; PHOTO; QWEST; SCANDAL; STEEL; SWEDISH MATCH; TULARIK; TULARIK INC; UNITED STEELWORKERS; WEIRTON STEEL CORP) (Bryan Treadway; BUSINESS DIGEST; Cigar; Cone Mills; Cullman; Fidel Castro.; Grant Graham; John Walker; Kevin Walsh; Lennart Sunden; Prosecutors; Reanna Smithey; Robert Sweet; Sara Smithey; Sunden; Thomas Hall; Wilbur Ross)

Edition: ONE-THREE

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2004 WLNR 19633138

New York Post
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March 30, 2004

Section: News

FAKE CIGARS GET ROLLED IN CUBA CASE

By WILLIAM NEUMAN

Capitalism has its advantages, comrade.

A federal judge in Manhattan yesterday said American trademark law protects Cuba's premium Cohiba brand of cigars and ordered a New York company to quit selling stogies under that name.

Cohibas were originally created in Cuba as the personal cigars of Fidel Castro and were later given as gifts to visiting heads of state and other dignitaries.

In 1982, Cuba began selling them internationally - but not in the United States, which has a trade embargo banning all goods from the communist island.

A decade later, the magazine Cigar Aficionado, in its premier issue, anointed Cohibas as one of the world's great cigars - and that's when a New York company called General Cigar started marketing a high-end stogie under the Cohiba label.

Made in the Dominican Republic, General Cigar's version of the Cohiba sells for between \$20, for a single 8 1/2-inch-long cigar, to \$7.35, for a 4-inch stogie.

Cubatabaco, the state-owned Cuban business that makes Cohiba, filed suit in 1997 to stop General from selling the cigars, and federal Judge Robert Sweet yesterday ruled that even though Cuban Cohibas aren't sold in the United States, the brand is famous enough that it deserves protection.

---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Smoking (1SM71))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (COHIBA; COHIBAS) (Capitalism; Castro; Cigar; Cigar Aficionado; FAKE CIGARS; Robert Sweet)

Word Count: 244

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3/30/04 PR Newswire 21:03:00

PR Newswire

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March 30, 2004

Federal Judge Awards COHIBA Rights to Cubatabaco

NEW YORK, March 30 /PRNewswire/ -- A federal judge has ruled in favor of Cubatabaco, the Cuban cigar company, in a trademark dispute over the U.S. rights to COHIBA, the cigar brand that obtained international fame as the favorite of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

In New York, the judge, Robert W. Sweet, Jr. of the United States District Court, held that Cuba's Cubatabaco, not General Cigar, a U.S. cigar company, is entitled to market cigars in the United States under the COHIBA name. In a 142-page decision released yesterday, Judge Sweet recognized the Cuban Cohiba as a "well-known" mark entitled to special international protection.

Judge Sweet held that Cubatabaco was entitled to an injunction prohibiting General Cigar from continuing to sell cigars under the COHIBA name. He also ordered cancellation of General Cigar's registration of the trademark. Cubatabaco additionally sought an award of General Cigar's profits from selling cigars under the COHIBA name; Judge Sweet ruled that "because the Court has made a finding that General Cigar is liable on the claim of trademark infringement, a trial on the issue of monetary relief is warranted."

Under Judge Sweet's ruling, the Cuban company will be able to export its COHIBA cigars to the United States once the U.S. embargo on trade with Cuba ends. Cuba's COHIBA, considered the flagship amongst Cuban cigars, is sold throughout the rest of the world

General Cigar, a leading U.S. cigar company, registered COHIBA in the U.S. in 1978 upon learning that it was the name of the Cuban President's favorite cigar. After a few years of desultory sales in the mid-1980's, General Cigar abandoned any use of the trademark for nearly five years until late 1992.

Then, in a turn of events considered critical by Judge Sweet, General Cigar "made a decision to adopt the name 'Cohiba' for a new super-premium product" after Cigar Aficionado, the leading U.S. cigar publication, praised COHIBA in its September 1992 premier issue. Judge Sweet ruled that "General Cigar made the decision in part to capitalize on the success of the Cuban Cohiba brand and especially the good ratings and the notoriety that it had received in Cigar Aficionado."

Judge Sweet held today that the Cuban company had a legally protectable right to COHIBA because the Cuban brand was "well-known" among U.S. premium cigar smokers before General Cigar resumed its use of the COHIBA mark in late 1992. He also found that an injunction against General Cigar's use of the COHIBA name was necessary to protect the consumer against confusion between the Cuban COHIBA and the General Cigar COHIBA.

"Judge Sweet's decision is one of the first U.S. decisions to apply the international 'well-known' marks doctrine for the determination of trademark rights," said Adargelio Garrido, General Counsel of Habanos, S.A., which provides legal

services to Cubatabaco. "The Cuban courts have applied the 'well-known marks' doctrine in favor of U.S. companies, and now, the U.S. courts have extended reciprocal protection," Garrido continued.

Michael Krinsky and David Goldstein of the New York firm of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman, P.C. were counsel for Cubatabaco. Kevin Walsh and Steven J. Young of Winston & Strawn were co-counsel. Latham & Watkins and Morgan & Finnegan represented General Cigar.

SOURCE Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman, P.C.

-0- 03/30/2004

/CONTACT: Kenny Juarez of The Abernathy MacGregor Group, +1-212-371-5999or kwj@abmac.com/

CO: Cubatabaco; Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky and Lieberman, P.C.;

ST: Cuba, New York

IN: TOB

SU: LAW

MW

-- NYTU165 --

4227 03/30/2004 16:03 EST <http://www.prnewswire.com>

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---- Index References ----

Company: LATHAM AND WATKINS

News Subject: (Sales (1SA20); Judicial (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Cigars (1CI03); Business Management (1BU42); Market Share (1MA91); Sales & Marketing (1MA51))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (ABERNATHY MACGREGOR GROUP; FEDERAL; LATHAM WATKINS; MW) (Adargelio Garrido; Awards COHIBA; Cigar; Cigar Aficionado; Cigar COHIBA; CO; COHIBA; David Goldstein; Fidel Castro; Garrido; Kevin Walsh; Krinsky; Lieberman; Michael Krinsky; Robert W. Sweet, Jr.; Steven J. Young; Sweet) (Cuba, New York)

Keywords: (TOB); (LAW)

Company Terms: CUBATABACO; RABINOWITZ BOUDIN STANDARD KRINSKY AND LIEBERMAN P C

Word Count: 746

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3/30/04 Reuters News 08:59:34

Reuters

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March 30, 2004

Swedish Match to appeal U.S. pro-Cuba cigar ruling.

STOCKHOLM, March 30 (Reuters) - Swedish Match (SWMA.ST) will appeal against a U.S. judge's decision in favour of a Cuban government-owned company over cigar trademark Cohiba, the Sweden-based match and tobacco product maker said on Tuesday.

On Friday, a judge in New York ruled in favour of Cuban government-owned Cubatabaco in its lawsuit against Swedish Match unit General Cigar over trademark ownership of the Cohiba brand in the United States. No damages were awarded, Swedish Match said.

"Based on our long-standing U.S. registration of the Cohiba brand and Cubatabaco's acquiescence for almost two decades, we marketed this brand with the confidence that we owned the marque," said General Cigar Chief Executive Edgar Cullman.

"We intend to appeal this decision and feel confident that it will be overturned," he said.

General Cigar, the leading premium cigar company in the United States, received its first registration of the Cohiba trademark in the United States in 1981 and obtained an updated registration in 1995, said Swedish Match. Cigars account for 23 percent of its sales.

In a separate statement late on Monday, Swedish Match said the European Court of Justice would hold a hearing on June 8 related to a European Union ban of certain tobacco products, such as Swedish Match's most profitable product, moist snuff, for health reasons.

"We believe that the current ban on (snuff) is inconsistent with several of the basic principles of EU law," the company's General Counsel Bo Aulin said.

"We believe that this ban should be removed," he said.

At 0855 GMT, Swedish Match shares traded one percent higher on the day, outperforming the Stockholm stock exchange's blue-chip OMX-index, which was down 0.6 percent.

---- Index References ----

Company: OMX AB; SWEDISH MATCH CORP; SWEDISH MATCH AB

News Subject: (European Union (1EU94); Smoking (1SM71); Sales & Marketing (1MA51); Judicial (1JU36); World Organizations (1IN77); Government (1GO80); Regulatory Affairs (1RE51))

Industry: (Food & Beverage Production (1FO79); Agriculture, Food & Beverage (1AG53); Tobacco (1TO65); Beverages (1BE22); Cigars (1CI03); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Northern Europe (1NO01); Caribbean (1CA06); North America (1NO39); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Sweden (1SW65); Europe (1EU83); Scandinavia (1SC27); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (EU; EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE; EUROPEAN UNION; OMX; SWEDISH; SWEDISH MATCH) (Cigar; Cohiba; Counsel Bo Aulin; Cubatabaco)

Word Count: 280

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2004 WLNR 19587788

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March 30, 2004

Section: Business

JUDGE BACKS CUBA FIRM ON CIGAR SALES

From the Associated Press and Bloomberg News.

Cuba's state-run tobacco company won a U.S. court order blocking General Cigar Holdings from selling cigars in the United States under the Cohiba brand favored by Fidel Castro.

U.S. District Judge Robert Sweet in Manhattan ruled that New York-based General Cigar, a unit of Swedish Match, didn't own the rights to the brand and violated the trademark.

Havana-based Cubatabaco owns the trademark and exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide except to the United States, where an embargo blocks the imports.

In a separate case, Bacardi is seeking to end the long-running trademark dispute over the rights to the Havana Club brand.

The rum giant, whose U.S. headquarters is in Miami, said it was filing a lawsuit late Monday in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. The suit asks the court to grant Bacardi exclusive U.S. rights to the premium Cuban rum trademark and cancel the registration currently held by Cubaexport, a Cuban government entity.

WORLD BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

--- Index References ---

Company: SWEDISH MATCH AB

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Intellectual Property (1IN75); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26))

Industry: (Rum (1RU61); Alcoholic Beverages (1AL86); Agriculture, Food & Beverage Regulatory (1AG56); Tobacco (1TO65); Food & Beverage Production (1FO79); Spirits (1SP77); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03); Beverages (1BE22); Food & Beverage Regulatory (1FO94); Agriculture, Food & Beverage (1AG53))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CUBATABACO; HAVANA CLUB; SWEDISH MATCH; US DISTRICT COURT; WORLD)
(BACKS CUBA; Cigar; Cigar Holdings; Cuba; Fidel Castro; Robert Sweet)

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3/29/04 Newsday A27
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March 29, 2004

Section: BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

CITY INC.

Bloomberg News; Alan J. Wax

CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR. Cuba's state-run tobacco company won a U.S. court order blocking General Cigar Holdings Inc. from selling cigars in the U.S. under the Cohiba brand favored by Fidel Castro. U.S. District Judge Robert Sweet in Manhattan ruled that New York-based General Cigar, a unit of Swedish Match AB, didn't own the rights to the brand and violated the trademark. Havana-based Cubatabaco owns the mark and exports Cuban Cohibas worldwide except to the U.S., where an embargo blocks the imports. General Cigar, 36 percent owned by the Cullman family, has been making Cohibas in the Dominican Republic for more than a decade and selling them in the U.S. since 1992 for as much as \$20 each, according to its Web site. The ruling deals a blow to Swedish Match, which last month said fourth-quarter profit fell 13 percent as the dollar dropped against the krona, cutting into revenue from the U.S.. General Cigar said it would appeal. The company grows its own Connecticut Shade wrapper tobacco and operates Club Macanudo, a cigar bar in New York City. Swedish Match sells Macanudo cigars and General brand snuff. - Bloomberg News

ANOTHER TRUMP TAKES MANHATTAN. Fred C. Trump III, who for almost four years has overseen the Long Island operations of what is now CB Richard Ellis Inc., left the commercial real estate firm to run the lower Manhattan office of competitor Newmark & Co. Real Estate. Trump, 41, a nephew of real estate mogul Donald Trump, arrived on Long Island in 2000 after working as an office broker in Park Avenue headquarters of the real estate firm that was known as Insignia/ESG. "It's just a really good opportunity. It gets me back into the city," Trump said. "Downtown's going to be such an exciting place." He said he anticipated expanding Newmark's downtown office. Trump, most recently executive managing director at CBRE, last year was named to head the combined Long Island office of Manhattan-based Insignia/ESG and Los Angeles-based CB Richard Ellis, which acquired Insignia. Patrick Murphy, executive vice president of the New York Tri-State Region for CBRE, will lead the Long Island office on an interim basis, assisted by Tom Kreiger.

- Alan J. Wax

Charts -1) LI STOCKS: The Newsday/Bloomberg Long Island Index. 2) MARKET STATS. 3) STOCK WATCH: New York City's 10 largest stocks, based on market value, fared yesterday (not in text database)

---- Index References ----

Company: SWEDISH MATCH AB; CB RICHARD ELLIS SERVICES INC

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65); Real Estate (1RE57))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Scandinavia (1SC27); Northern Europe (1NO01); Europe (1EU83); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Sweden (1SW65); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (BLOOMBERG; CB RICHARD ELLIS; CB RICHARD ELLIS INC; CIGAR; CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; CITY INC; CLOSE; CLUB MACANUDO; CUBATABACO; ESG; INSIGNIA; MACANUDO; NEWMARK; NEWMARK CO; SWEDISH MATCH) (Alan J. Wax; Charts; Cigar; Cullman; Donald Trump; Fidel Castro.; Fred C. Trump; Patrick Murphy; Robert Sweet; Tom Kreiger; Trump)

Edition: CITY

Word Count: 476

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November 1, 2002

Volume 10; Issue 10

Cubatabaco, General Cigar to settle Cohiba case in court. (Tobacco).

Luxner, Larry

Whose Cohiba is it anyway? That question will be answered in a New York courtroom sometime early next year, following a trademark infringement lawsuit brought by state-owned Empresa Cubana del Tabaco (Cubatabaco) against New York-based General Cigar Holdings Inc.

Nick Simeonidis, senior vice-president and general counsel for General Cigar, said the case was originally supposed to be heard last month, but it's been delayed and now won't come to trial until April 2003.

Both sides had moved for summary judgement since no material issues of fact were in dispute, but that motion was denied over the summer by Judge Robert Sweet of the Southern District of New York.

"In sum, we're arguing that we own the trademark," said Simeonidis in a recent phone interview. "Cubatabaco knew about this for years and years, and didn't do anything about it until very late--too late in fact."

The Cohiba brand, created in 1965 by Che Guevara, was the first cigar brand established by the Castro government following the 1959 revolution. It was conceived as a super-premium cigar for Castro's private use, and to be given out to heads of state and other VIPs.

Thanks to their superior quality and relative scarcity, Cohibas quickly attained a cult status among cigar lovers and, by the early '70s, was on sale in some Cuban cigar shops.

In 1982, Cuba began exporting Cohibas to Europe, where they were an instant hit.

General Cigar first registered the Cohiba name in the United States in 1978, and since the '80s has been making Cohibas at its huge factory in the Dominican Republic. In 1997, it introduced the famous "red dot" Cohiba.

"You can't sell Cuban-made Cohibas [in the United States], but we've been selling Dominican Cohibas in the United States for quite some time," Simeonidis told CubaNews. "Cohiba is now a very well-known brand for General Cigar, and it's one of several very high-quality brands that we manufacture."

In February 1997, Cuba attempted to cancel General's trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, but suspended that action when it sued Culbro Corp., the former parent of General Cigar, later that year, accusing that

company of trademark infringement, false designation of source of origin and other allegations. In January 1998, the parties agreed to attempt to settle out of court.

Earlier this year, Judge Sweet found that General Cigar's first registration of the Cohiba trademark had been abandoned in the 1980s, and that the case should be resolved on the basis of its second registration in 1992.

The judge also dismissed Cubatabaco's claims of ownership to the trademark based upon two intellectual property treaties.

"Cubatabaco is trying to make the claim that somehow our registration should be cancelled," said Simeonidis. "If that were the case, then no one would be able to sell a Cohiba in the U.S. But we don't think that will happen. At trial, it'll be proven that we were right in our claims."

Miguel Angel Casas, president of ICT--a joint-venture cigar factory owned 50% by Cubatabaco and 50% by Madrid-based Altadis S.A.--says he wouldn't count on that.

"Cohiba is the indigenous Taino word for tobacco," Casas told us. "We began producing Cohibas 37 years ago. Cuba initiated the lawsuit because this is theft of our trademark."

Meanwhile, a federal court in Miami has dismissed an unrelated lawsuit by General Cigar against competitor Altadis and its U.S. affiliates, Altadis USA Inc. and Consolidated Cigar Holdings Inc.

In its lawsuit originally filed in November 2000, General Cigar had alleged that Altadis USA was forcing cigar wholesalers and retailers to buy its brands as a condition for future supplies of Cuban cigars once the U.S. embargo was lifted. It also claimed Altadis had violated U.S. antitrust and trademark laws.

But Judge Federico A. Moreno ruled that General Cigar had failed to make a case either for illegal monopolization or violation of antitrust laws. Moreno also dismissed claims that Altadis employees had made false statements about General Cigar products, and he threw out the latter company's claims for actual, treble and punitive damages.

Simeonidis said his company is appealing Moreno's ruling.

RELATED ARTICLE: Cuban customs officials launch crackdown on counterfeit cigars.

HAVANA -- The elderly waiter at the Hotel Neptuno was clearing off our table when he casually leaned over, asking in a hushed voice if I'd like a bargain on a genuine Cohiba.

How much, I asked out of curiosity.

"For you, two dollars, and only a dollar for a Montecristo," he whispered--to which I quickly responded, "no thanks."

Aside from the fact that I don't smoke, logic told me that at that such ridiculously low prices, the waiter's cigars had to be fakes.

Apparently, the proliferation of falsified stogies has become a big headache for the Cuban government, which recently began applying a series of measures aimed at stopping the problem before it begins bringing down the image of Cuban cigars in general.

Theoretically, though not always in practice, tourists must now declare purchases of three or more boxes of cigars--regardless of brand--upon leaving the country. Bills of sale for any purchases must be presented, with the original and copy; meanwhile, the documents themselves are being perfected to avoid falsification.

Also being studied is the possibility of inserting in cigar boxes a "new element of identification, whose reproduction or imitation will be completely impossible, like banknotes," according to Cuba's chief customs inspector, Reinaldo Robaina.

In declarations to the weekly Granma Internacional, Robaina said his agency is coordinating its efforts with the Spanish government.

Last year, Spain was Cuba's best customer for cigars, buying 45 million of them, followed by France, which bought 16 million cigars.

Sources within Habanos S.A. say increasing enthusiasm over Cuban cigars in Europe, combined with rising tourism to Cuba and the island's continuing economic crisis, have all fueled the imagination of falsifiers, traffickers and suppliers of false cigars.

These con artists aren't limited to waiters at the Hotel Neptuno. They hang out in tourist areas like the Malecon and Habana Vieja--especially near the Partagas and H. Upmann factories--where, in broken English, Italian or French, they offer boxes of cigars for \$20-\$30 each whose authentic version costs 10 times as much in shops.

Tourists who buy these phony cigars may have them confiscated anyway at the airport. Customs official Hector de Moya Martinez said that in 2000, his office recorded 5,163 infractions involving 22,000 boxes of 25 cigars each. Thanks to greater scrutiny, in 2001, the number had dropped to 4,581 infractions involving 19,241 boxes.

Meanwhile, the Castro government is asking the World Trade Organization to grant Cuban cigars the same protection that wines and other alcoholic beverages enjoy under "denomination of origin."

"In the past 10 years, Cuba has earned \$400,000 in judicial rulings to respect these denominations of origin," explained the vice-director of Cuba's Office of Intellectual Property, Emilia Lara.

--LARRY LUXNER

---- Index References ----

Company: INFORMER COMPUTER TERMINALS INC ICT; TABALACERA; US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE; CULBRO CORP; GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; ICT AUTOMATISING NV

News Subject: (Intellectual Property (1IN75); Patents & Trademarks (1PA79); Smoking (1SM71); Economics & Trade (1EC26); Business Litigation (1BU04); Business Management (1BU42); Business Lawsuits & Settlements (1BU19))

Industry: (Insurance (1IN97); Tobacco (1TO65); Financial Services Regulatory (1FI03); Insurance Products (1IN13); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Insurance Regulatory (1IN40); Financial Services (1FI37); Insurance Industry Legal Issues (1IN64); Cigars (1CI03); Intellectual Property Insurance (1IN22))

Region: (Spain (1SP23); Cuba (1CU43); Iberia (1IB61); Caribbean (1CA06); New York (1NE72); Americas (1AM92); USA (1US73); Europe (1EU83); North America (1NO39); Southern Europe (1SO59); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (ALTADIS; CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; COHIBA; CULBRO CORP; H UPMANN; HECTOR DE MOYA MARTINEZ; HOTEL NEPTUNO; ICT; US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE) (Bills; Casas; Castro; Che Guevara; Cigar; Cohibas; CubaNews; Cubatabaco; Empresa Cubana; English; Federico A. Moreno; Granma Internacional; Habana Vieja; Miguel Angel Casas; Moreno; Nick Simeonidis; Reinaldo Robaina; Robaina; Robert Sweet; Simeonidis; Sweet; Theoretically; Tobacco) (Cuba; Estados Unidos)

Keywords: (General interest); (News, opinion and commentary); (Casos); (Propiedad intelectual); (Copyright internacional); (Marcas comerciales); (Puros)

Company Terms: CUBATABACO; GENERAL CIGAR HOLDINGS INC

Ticker Symbol: MPP

Word Count: 1419

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Section: NEWS

DISPUTE OVER CIGARS MAY SIGNAL A CRACK IN CUBA EMBARGO

DEBORAH RAMIREZ SUN-SENTINEL, SOUTH FLORIDA

MIAMI

When an American company started marketing a cigar with a famous Cuban brand name last year, Fidel Castro turned to his nemesis, the U.S. government, for relief.

Cuba took the unusual step of asking the federal government and courts to protect its prized Cohiba trademark. Now, General Cigar of Bloomfield, Conn., has begun settlement talks with Cuba.

The case could have implications for the 36-year-old U.S. economic embargo, Cuba watchers say.

"People don't fight over trademarks unless they think there is going to be a market," said Pamela Falk, a professor of trade and commercial transactions at the City University of New York School of Law. "It's an indication that the parties involved believe the door is going to open."

General Cigar may become the first U.S. company to compensate Cuba in a trademark dispute. Such an agreement could spur efforts to settle thousands of American claims against Cuba, observers say.

These claims, involving millions of dollars, resulted from Castro's seizure of American properties in Cuba in the early 1960s.

The case, Falk said, is "a crack in the embargo."

Cohiba cigars can't be sold legally in the United States, but an estimated 5 million of them arrive here illegally each year. Cuba exported 100 million cigars last year.

A single Cohiba starts at \$25 on the black market.

"Everybody wants Cohibas," said Mario Aguilar, a spokesman for a cigar trade show in Miami Beach last week.

As demand for Cohibas grew, General Cigar decided to relaunch its premium stogie of the same name. The U.S. company had sold its Cohiba cigars since 1978, but only in limited quantities.

In July, the company introduced an upgraded Cohiba, made in the Dominican Republic and starting at \$12 each.

For years, Castro gave the dark and robust Cohibas as gifts to visiting dignitaries and friends.

The Cuban government never registered the Cohiba trademark in the United States. Despite the embargo, Cuban companies can record brand names in Washington.

General Cigar registered its Cohiba brand name in 1978 and says it was first on the U.S. market.

Cuba counters that General Cigar is taking advantage of the embargo, which bans Cuban products.

Cubatabacos, the Cuban government-owned tobacco company, filed a complaint with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in January 1997. In October, Cuba asked the Treasury Department for permission to file a lawsuit. Permission, required by the U.S. embargo law, was granted.

One month later, Cubatabacos asked a New York federal court to remove General Cigar Cohibas from the market.

But the matter is likely to be settled privately. Both parties have told the court they want to negotiate an agreement.

PHOTO

UPI FILE PHOTO : FOR YEARS, CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO GAVE COHIBA CIGARS AS GIFTS TO DIGNITARIES.

--- Index References ---

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); Cigars (1CI03); Government Litigation (1GO18))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Florida (1FL79); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CIGAR COHIBAS; CITY UNIVERSITY; COHIBAS; PHOTOUPI; TREASURY DEPARTMENT; US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE) (Castro; Cigar; Cohiba; Cubatabacos; Falk; Fidel Castro; FIDEL CASTRO GAVE COHIBA CIGARS; Mario Aguilar; Pamela Falk)

Edition: WEEKEND

Word Count: 568

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February 27, 1998

Section: BUSINESS

STOGIE SPAT
CUBA ASKS U.S. TO PROTECT ITS COHIBA NAME.

DEBORAH RAMIREZ Staff Writer

When an American company started marketing a cigar with a famous Cuban brand name last year, Fidel Castro turned to his nemesis, the U.S. government, for relief.

Cuba took the unusual step of asking the federal government and courts to protect its prized Cohiba trademark.

Now, General Cigar, a Bloomfield, Conn., company involved in the dispute, has begun talks with Cuba, trying to reach a settlement.

The case is precedent-setting and could have implications for the 36-year-old U.S. economic embargo, Cuba watchers say.

General Cigar may become the first U.S. company to compensate Cuba in a trademark dispute. Such an agreement could spur efforts to settle thousands of American claims against Cuba, observers say.

These claims, involving millions of dollars, resulted from Castro's seizure of American properties in Cuba in the early 1960s, and form the basis of the embargo.

"This case is a landmark, in an area where no one ever thought it would come," said Pamela Falk, a professor of international trade and commercial transactions at the City University of New York School of Law.

"Because of settlement discussions, it opens the door to other settlements. It's a crack in the embargo," she said.

Fueling the issue is a chic tobacco subculture in which Cuban cigars are a desired but forbidden fruit.

Cohiba cigars can't be sold legally in the United States, but an estimated 5 million of them arrive here illegally. Cuba exported 100 million cigars last year.

A single Cohiba starts at \$25 on the black market. Cohibas have become a status symbol with cigar lovers.

Christie Hefner, president of the Playboy empire, is among the VIPs at a three-day cigar trade show that opened Thursday at the Miami Beach Convention Center. More than 5,000 tobacco executives, celebrities and others have been invited to the private show.

Cuba's Cohibas won't be on display. But cigar connoisseurs covet them.

"Everybody wants Cohibas," said Mario Aguilar, a spokesman for the trade show. "They are known around the world."

As demand for Cohibas grew, General Cigar decided to relaunch its premium stogie of the same name. The U.S. company had sold its Cohiba cigars since 1978, but only in limited quantities. The cigars are made in the Dominican Republic and start at \$12 each.

Cuba's Cohiba is the first cigar produced by Castro's communist regime. It got its name from the Taino Indian word for tobacco.

The Cuban government never registered the Cohiba trademark in the United States. Despite the embargo, Cuban firms can record brand names and other so-called intellectual property in Washington.

General Cigar argues its Cohiba was first on the U.S. market. Culbro Corp., the parent of General Cigar, registered the Cohiba brand name in 1978.

Cuba counters that General Cigar is taking advantage of the embargo, which bans Cuban products.

In October, Cuba asked the Treasury Department for permission to file a lawsuit. Permission, required by the U.S. embargo law, was granted.

One month later, Cubatabacos, the Cuban government-owned tobacco company, asked a New York federal court to remove General Cigar Cohibas from the market.

But the matter is likely to be settled privately. Both parties have told the court they want to negotiate an agreement. Because of travel restrictions between the countries, Cuban and American tobacco executives met recently in Mexico City to strike a deal.

In the meantime, General Cigar's new Cohiba is making its debut at cigar shops across South Florida. There, aficionados debate which is the real Cohiba.

"I'm very anti-Castro, so I'm for General Cigar," said Juan Carlos Blanco-Borges, who owns Lola's Cigar Shop in southwest Miami-Dade County. "But, if I want to be objective, the Cubans made it first."

---- Index References ----

Company: CULBRO CORP

News Subject: (Smoking (ISM71))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Cigars (1CI03); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Florida (1FL79); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (CITY UNIVERSITY; CULBRO CORP; LOLA; MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION CENTER; PLAYBOY; TREASURY DEPARTMENT) (Blanco-Borges; Castro; Christie Hefner; Cigar; Cigar Cohibas; Cigar Shop; Cohiba; Cohibas; Fidel Castro; Juan Carlos; Mario Aguilar; Pamela Falk)

Keywords: U.S. CUBA RELATIONS; TOBACCO INDUSTRY; GENERAL CIGAR; NAME CONTROVERSY

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Section: BUSINESS

SHORT CUTS

COMPILED FROM NEWS SERVICES

SEC Proposal Would Limit Fund Mailings

SMALL INVESTORS would receive fewer mutual fund prospectuses and corporate annual reports in the mail under a rule proposed yesterday by the Securities and Exchange Commission. Under current law, such disclosure documents must be delivered to each investment account.

Because of the panoply of investments now made through a variety of accounts - mutual funds, 401(k) plans, IRAs, trusts and others - a single household often receives multiple copies of the same document.

"Each year millions of investors receive unneeded extra copies of these documents that serve no purpose other than to increase costs," SEC Chairman Arthur Levitt Jr. said before the commissioners' unanimous vote. The new rule would "save investors from receiving these extra copies and allow companies to save the wasted cost of printing and delivering these documents," Levitt said.

Electronic delivery of financial disclosure documents would not be affected. Levitt said the SEC is encouraging small investors to call 800-SEC-0330 to ask questions and get more information. Information on the proposal was being posted on the agency's Internet site at <http://www.sec.gov>.

HILTON DROPS ITT BID. Hilton Hotels Corp. yesterday ended its 10-month-old takeover battle for ITT Corp. by formally terminating its \$9.3 billion hostile bid for the rival hotel and gambling company. Hilton's move followed the re-election of ITT's board of directors at ITT's annual shareholder meeting in Manhattan, where it is based. Beverly Hills, Calif.-based Hilton had nominated its own slate of directors in hopes of unseating ITT's board and acquiring ITT for its Sheraton and Caesars World operations.

STUDIO MAKES MARKET DEBUT. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. found itself playing to a tough audience when the legendary movie studio debuted yesterday on the New York Stock Exchange. The opening price of \$20 per share fell quickly, dropping to a low of \$19 in heavy trading before rebounding late in the day to a closing price of \$21. Some analysts attributed the initial slide to investors' concern about the company's weak earnings history and profitability of upcoming films. The studio distributed such classics as "Gone with the Wind" before its fortunes waned in a series of damaging deals during the 1980s and early 1990s.

LEO BURNETT REORGANIZES. Leo Burnett Co. announced details of its reorganization into seven mini-advertising agencies within the firm. Three of the mini-agencies, encompassing some of the firm's largest clients, will be operational at the beginning of 1998, with the remainder to be completed by spring next year, the privately-held company said. Each will have its own management team with a managing director, a managing creative director and a managing planning director. The management team, in conjunction with an executive TV producer, will direct operations at each mini-agency.

PRIME RETAIL TO BUY HORIZON. Prime Retail Inc. said it agreed to buy Horizon Group Inc., owner of the Bellport Outlet Center, for \$906.3 million in stock and assumed debt, creating the largest owner and operator of factory outlet retail centers in the United States. The purchase will almost double Baltimore-based Prime Retail's portfolio to 43 properties and 11.8 million square feet across the country, representing 20 percent of the market. That's double its closest competitor, FAC Realty Trust Inc. Under the agreement, Prime Retail will only retain 20 of Horizon's best-performing 37 centers. The rest, including the money-losing \$36 million Dole Cannery project in Hawaii, will be spun off to Horizon's shareholders before the sale is completed. Prime Retail will contribute three centers to the venture.

NEW LIFE EDITOR NAMED. Norman Pearlstine, editor in chief of Time Inc., yesterday named the second new editor of Life magazine in less than a year. Isolde Motley, who was the founding editor of Martha Stewart Living and the first editor of This Old House when the fix-it-up magazine was launched in 1995, will assume the top job of managing editor at Life on Jan. 1. She will succeed Jay Lovinger, who had been promoted to managing editor in December and now will become an editor-at-large of Time Inc.

Motley is the seventh new managing editor of a Time Inc. property appointed by Pearlstine since he took over in Jan., 1995. Last week, Pearlstine announced that Robert Safian would replace Frank Lalli as managing editor of Money.

MILKEN INVESTIGATED. A federal prosecutor is investigating whether former junk bond king Michael Milken obstructed justice in any business dealings since his release from prison after serving time for securities fraud, court documents show. The allegation was raised in a letter from the chief U.S. probation officer in Los Angeles, Robert M. Latta, to U.S. District Judge Kimba M. Wood, who presided over Milken's case. Milken has been on probation since his release from prison in 1993.

Milken has been under scrutiny by the Securities and Exchange Commission for more than a year to see whether his role as a consultant in three transactions violates the terms of his punishment banning him from the securities industry. "The concept that there is obstruction of justice is sort of ridiculous," said Milken's attorney, Richard Sandler.

UAW CREATES NEW POST. The United Auto Workers union plans to create a new top-level organizing position as part of a more aggressive push for new members, especially at automotive suppliers, union officials said. Union leaders have tapped Bob King, 51, an attorney and director of UAW Region 1A on Detroit's West Side, for the position, the officials said. King declined to comment but has said in the past the UAW needs to be more aggressive in organizing. The move comes as the union struggles to reverse a skid in members. Membership has dropped more than 50 percent in the last 20 years, to 742,000 from 1.5 million in 1978, as nonunion foreign competitors in the car industry have taken market share from U.S. producers and improvements in production technology have reduced the need for workers.

SUIT OVER CIGAR NAME. Trade embargo or no trade embargo, a Cuban company says it isn't going to let General Cigar Holdings Inc. get away with what it views as poaching on the name of the world's most famous Cuban cigar. Empresa Cubana del Tabaco, known as Cubatabaco, has filed a trademark-infringement suit against General Cigar in federal court in New York. The dispute concerns Cohiba - the brand of Cuban cigar most coveted by cigar aficionados - and whether General Cigar has the right to use the name in the United States in the wake of the longstanding trade embargo against Cuba.

Cubatabaco is the exporter of the Cohiba cigar, which was initially made for Cuban leader Fidel Castro. But because of the trade embargo, Cuban Cohibas can't legally be sold in the United States. That's left an opening for General Cigar, which has registered Cohiba as a U.S. trademark and introduced its own Cohiba brand in September with a big advertising push. That angered the Cuban company. It claims General Cigar is deceiving the public by using the world-renowned Cohiba name to market an inferior cigar.

But Ross Wollen, General Cigar's senior vice president and general counsel, disputes Cubatabaco's allegations and says, the company's predecessor first applied to register the Cohiba mark in the United States in 1978 and has been selling a differently blended cigar named Cohiba since then on a limited basis.

PD:

--- Index References ---

Company: METRO GOLDWYN MAYER INC; LEO BURNETT WORLDWIDE INC; ITT CORP; TIME WARNER INC; HILTON HOTELS CORP; HORIZON; PRIME RETAIL INC; HORIZON GROUP INC

News Subject: (Corporate Financial Data (1XO59); Cigars (1CI03))

Industry: (Investment Management (1IN34); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Financial Services (1FI37); Tobacco (1TO65); 401(k) (14099))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); California (1CA98); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (BELLPORT OUTLET CENTER; CIGAR HOLDINGS INC; COHIBA; EXCHANGE COMMISSION; FAC; HILTON; HILTON HOTELS CORP; HORIZON; HORIZON GROUP INC; ITT; ITT CORP; LEO; LEO BURNETT CO; MARTHA STEWART LIVING; METRO GOLDWYN MAYER INC; NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE; PD; PRIME; PRIME RETAIL; PRIME RETAIL INC; REALTY TRUST INC; SEC; SECURITIES; SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION; SMALL; STUDIO; SUIT; TIME INC; TV; UAW; UNITED AUTO; UNITED STORES) (Arthur Levitt Jr.; Beverly Hills; Cigar; Dole Cannery; Empresa Cubana; Fidel Castro; Frank Lalli; Hilton; IRAs; Isolde Motley; Jay Lovinger; Kimba M. Wood; Levitt; Membership; Michael Milken; Milken; Motley; Norman Pearlstine; Pearlstine; Richard Sandler; Robert M. Latta; Robert Safian; Ross Wollen; SHORT CUTS; Tabaco)

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October 1, 1997

CUBA-TRADE: FEUD OVER CIGAR BRAND

By Dalia Acosta HAVANA, Oct. 1 (IPS) -- What's in a name? Enough to start a trade war if it happens to be "Cohiba," the most famous brand of Cuban cigar. Cuba is furious at plans by the U.S.-based General Cigar Corporation to introduce a Cohiba brand of its own in the United States and is threatening legal action. It already has complained to the U.S. Office for Trade Marks and Patents. Ana Lopez Garcia, director of marketing of Habanos S.A., the company that manufactures the real Cohibas, says that the U.S. firm is taking advantage of the fact that Cuba cannot place its cigars in the U.S. market because of Washington's sanctions against this country. General Cigars Corporation, based in New York, announced it was launching the sale of its new cigars this week in Miami. Cuban authorities argue that the "fake" Cohibas threaten the commercial prestige of the famous cigars. They maintain that the quality of Cuban cigars is directly related to the island's soil and climate, the traditional methods of harvesting and drying, and the manufacture by hand. Nonetheless, they insist that no true cigar connoisseur would be fooled by the U.S.-made Cohibas. "No doubt that product will not fool the experts -- the real connoisseurs of the flavor of cigars -- and like many other imitators of our product it is destined to fail," said Lopez Garcia. The name Cohiba was originally registered in the United States in 1982 by the American firm Cultbro Corporation, which later ceded it to General Cigars. Meanwhile, General Cigars registered another commercial brand under the name Cohiba but written in italics. Cohibas are made with tobacco cultivated by Alejandro Robaina, a private landowner who sells his entire harvest to the government, and who owns the best lands in the area of Vuelta Abajo, some 200 kilometers from Havana, where the highest quality leaf in Cuba is grown. Lopez Garcia says that the cigars made by General Cigars lack "the main components that make Cohibas famous: Cuban leaves, tobacco and paper." The representative of Habanos S.A. added that, according to the U.S. firm, the cigars to be distributed in the United States are made with Dominican leaves, Cuban seeds, Indonesian tobacco, and paper from Cameroon. There is a precedent to the current uproar over cigar names. In 1989, the Swiss tobacco company Davidoff et Cie and the Cuban state firm Cubatabaco went to court over the name "Davidoff." The battle lasted a year and reached the courts in Britain and 39 other countries before it was over. In a "friendly" agreement, Cubatobaco ceded the rights to the Davidoff brand to the Swiss firm. This kind of solution is not expected in the case of Cohiba as they are the most prestigious of all cigars produced in Cuba. They first appeared in 1966 on the initiative of President Fidel Castro who, in addition to smoking them himself, would distribute Cohibas as personal gifts. Cohibas only appeared on the open market in 1982. The boxes of Cuban cigars, which go for hundreds of dollars in any part of the world, fetch their highest price in New York, where a box of smuggled cigars can cost up to \$700, as a consequence of Washington's ban on Cuban imports. The taste for Cuban cigars seems to be on the rise in the United States, according to reports received here. Last year U.S. customs confiscated more than \$1 million worth of smuggled Cuban cigars. COPYRIGHT 1997 IPS/GIN

---- Index References ----

News Subject: (Cigars (1CI03))

Industry: (Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Tobacco (1TO65))

Region: (Cuba (1CU43); Europe (1EU83); Central Europe (1CE50); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Switzerland (1SW77); North America (1NO39); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06); Western Europe (1WE41); Latin America (1LA15))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (COHIBA; CULTBRO CORP; DAVIDOFF; GENERAL CIGARS; GENERAL CIGARS CORP; GIN; US OFFICE FOR TRADE MARKS; VUELTA ABAJO) (Alejandro Robaina; Ana Lopez Garcia; Cigar; Cohibas; Cubatobaco; Dalia Acosta HAVANA; Fidel Castro; Lopez Garcia; Nonetheless)

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May 15, 1997

Section: Front

CUBA FILES RUM AND CIGAR TRADEMARK CHALLENGES IN U.S.

JUAN O. TAMAYO Herald Staff Writer

In a trade fight with strong political overtones, Cuba has filed legal challenges in the United States against Bacardi and General Cigar Co. for the rights to the Havana Club rum and Cohiba cigar trademarks.

At stake are tens of millions of dollars in international sales of Cuba's best-known rum, as well as cigars once made exclusively for President Fidel Castro and now often ranked as the world's best.

But the twin challenges also mark a new aggressiveness by Havana and U.S. companies that may signal a belief that Washington might soon lift its embargo on Havana and open the huge U.S. market to Cuban goods.

"When companies begin to be aggressive on trademark issues, it usually means they believe there will be, sooner rather than later, a market for the products," said John Kavulich of the New York-based U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council.

There's also bad blood between Havana and Bacardi-Martini USA, the Cuban exile-owned rum empire that lobbied for the Helms-Burton law, which allows exiles to sue for properties seized by the Castro regime.

Complex case

The twin Cuban challenges, filed 22 days apart in late 1996 and early 1997, are wrapped in a complex skein of laws, rules and regulations involving trademark rights, international treaties and the U.S. embargo.

Lawyers for Havana, Bacardi and General Cigar all declined comment, but trade experts said the Cohiba case is simpler and probably will be decided on the basis of which side can prove the earliest commerce in the brand.

Culbro Corp., parent of General Cigars, began registering Cohiba cigars with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in 1978. But Culbro apparently has produced only limited quantities of the cigars and sold them only in a limited number of stores, U.S. cigar industry sources said.

Cuba never registered the brand in the United States, though it could have. The U.S. embargo allows Cuban firms to register so-called intellectual property like brand names or logos with U.S. agencies.

'Famous name' claimed

But Havana, in a Jan. 15 petition to the USPTO to cancel Culbro's trademark, claimed Cohibas fall under the category of "famous name" -- brands such as Xerox that under international law and treaty cannot be taken by anyone else, even in the absence of a trademark registration.

Cuba claims it began making Cohibas in 1960 and selling them in diplomatic stores in Havana in 1967. But its Cohibas were made only for Castro and visiting dignitaries, and were not commercially available until 1981, U.S. cigar industry sources said. Some Cuban cigar advertisements cite 1982 as the year when "Cuba's best-kept secret" went public.

"What Culbro did [in registering Cohiba] here was a 'midnight raid,' but it may win because the Cubans must prove they had a product on the market," said one Washington lawyer who watches U.S.-Cuba trade issues.

Experts say Cuba appears to have a much stronger case in its Dec. 23 suit in New York federal court against Bacardi-Martini USA, the world's leading rum maker, and three distributors.

Simmering disputes

That case is also more significant, they added, because it goes to the heart of simmering disputes between Cuban exiles and Havana over the rights to trademarks registered in pre-Castro Cuba.

"Whenever the embargo goes, there will be a mad rush to see who has the rights to products here and in Cuba," said Pamela Falk, who teaches international trade at the law school of the City University of New York.

Cubaexport S.A. went to the USPTO in Washington in 1976 and registered Havana Club, a rum brand that Castro seized from the Arechabala family in 1960. Legally blocked from using the also-seized Bacardi name abroad, Cuba has made Havana Club its top export brand in Europe, Canada and Mexico.

Bacardi spokesmen say Bacardi began negotiating with the Arechabalas to buy the Havana Club name "long ago" but declined to give a date, adding that the company began production in 1995 and finalized the deal with the Arechabalas last month.

While U.S. courts have upheld the right of exiles to brands they owned in Cuba, holders must produce goods or risk losing their marks. It's not known whether Havana Club was produced anywhere outside Cuba between 1960 and 1995.

Bacardi's lawyers first argued that Cubaexport committed fraud in 1995 when it obtained a U.S. Treasury permit to transfer the trademark to Havana Club Holding, a joint Cuban venture with French liquor giant Pernod-Ricard.

Argument tossed out

Judge Shira Scheindlin tossed out that argument March 10, ruling that Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control had the power to issue such a permit.

Scheindlin has yet to rule on Cuba's request to order Bacardi to stop selling Havana Club. But in her March ruling, the judge made several seemingly critical remarks on the U.S. embargo.

"The wisdom of maintaining the Cuba embargo . . . some 35 years after its inception has come under serious attack from many camps and on many grounds in recent months," the judge wrote, although the legality of the embargo is not at all involved in the court case.

Despite the embargo, U.S. companies have registered and maintained some 400 trademarks in Cuba since 1963, and Cuban and U.S. lawyers have battled over such rights many times in third countries.

U.S. firms that own such famous Cuban cigar brands as H. Upmann, Montecristo and Por Larranaga are fighting a major case in French courts against Havana's Cubatabaco.

A French court ruled in favor of the U.S. firms in 1992, but an appeals court overturned that decision in 1995. The case is now under final review by France's highest appeals court.

THE AMERICAS

--- Index References ---

Company: XEROX CORP; CULBRO CORP; PERNOD RICARD

News Subject: (Legal (1LE33); International Law (1IN60); Cigars (1CI03))

Industry: (Rum (1RU61); Alcoholic Beverages (1AL86); Tobacco (1TO65); Food & Beverage Production (1FO79); Spirits (1SP77); Consumer Products & Services (1CO62); Beverages (1BE22); Agriculture, Food & Beverage (1AG53))

Region: (Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); Latin America (1LA15); Cuba (1CU43); USA (1US73); New York (1NE72); Caribbean (1CA06))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (AMERICAS; CIGAR; CIGAR CO; CITY UNIVERSITY; COHIBA; CUBA; CULBRO; CULBRO CORP; HAVANA; HAVANA CLUB; HAVANA CLUB HLDG; MARTINI USA; PERNOD RICARD; TREASURY; US PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE; US TREASURY; USA; USPTO; XEROX) (Bacardi; Castro; Castro Cuba; CIGAR TRADEMARK CHALLENGES; Cigars; CUBA; Cubaexport; Cubaexport S.A.; Famous; Fidel Castro; FILES RUM; H. Upmann; John Kavulich; Montecristo and Por Larranaga; Pamela Falk; Scheindlin; Shira Scheindlin)

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